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Readings and lessons

David Lodge

DAN JACOBSON

The Story of the Stories: The Chosen People and Its God
211pp. Secker and Warburg. £8.95.
0 436 22048 2

ROBERT ALTER

The Art of Biblical Narrative
195pp. Allen and Unwin. £10.
0 04 801022 7

Here are two books about the Bible by two writers whose disciplinary base is secular literature rather than theology or scriptural exegesis. Dan Jacobson is Reader in English at University College London, as well as being a distinguished novelist. Robert Alter is professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. Both authors are Jewish. One might expect their books to have a lot in common. In fact their approach to the subject is entirely different.

Jacobson's *The Story of the Stories* is an extended polemic essay on the historical and ideological myth that lies behind the books of the Old Testament, and on its ramifications in the New. He concentrates on the Prophetic books, such as Deuteronomy and Isaiah, and admits that he thus neglects the narrative books which are particularly prized by those who read the Bible "as literature". Robert Alter, on the other hand, has such readers very much in mind, and concentrates on precisely those books of the Old Testament which Jacobson passes over. For Alter, narrativity is the very essence of the Bible (by which he means the Old Testament exclusively) and inseparable from its moral and spiritual import. Not only, he argues, were the writers of the Old Testament precursors of modern novelists; to approach such stories as those of Joseph, or David, or Balaam with the tools of modern criticism of fiction is the best way to apprehend the real profundity, subtlety and complexity of their meanings, which are often overlooked or obscured by the positivist historical approach of modern biblical scholarship.

Again, Jacobson's book is ideological. Alter's recuperative, Jacobson's is directed at the "general reader". Alter's at the student of literature and/or the Bible. Jacobson writes as an amateur making a bold foray into intellectual territory already staked out by a formidable body of professional experts; Alter makes a bid-over bid for that territory in the name of his own professionalism. Jacobson writes simply, directly, sometimes colloquially, with an effect of sincerity and avoidance of cant that reminds one of George Orwell. Robert Alter writes in the best mode of academic discourse: learned, eloquent, urbane, using technical jargon only when it seems useful and always with careful explanation. Both books are excellent of their kind, and well worth reading. They are not really comparable. Yet they complement each other splendidly, and, quite fortuitously, Robert Alter's book provides a kind of response to the challenge posted by Dan Jacobson's.

The challenge is directed at anyone, whether Jew or Christian (but principally the former), who considers that the Bible is in some sense a revelation of religious truth, of the nature of God and man's relation to God. Dan Jacobson is ethnically Jewish, but a non-believer. He starts from the rationalist and materialist assumption that Yaweh, the God of the Old Testament, and the role assigned to him in the history of Israel, is a fiction, and his interest in trying to understand the motivation behind that fiction: why did the Jews make up this story about themselves and Yaweh, and what does it mean? Not what did they think it meant, which is very obvious but what does it really mean? "Never trust the teller, trust the tale!" Dan Jacobson cleaves to Lawrence's dictum, which is, indeed, a cardinal principle of modern hermeneutics, from Freud and Nietzsche to Lévi-Strauss.

Jacobson begins by citing the sombre account, in 2 Kings, of the evil reign of King Zedekiah, his rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the capture and destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of the Babylonian exile. Zedekiah's personal fate was particularly horrible. "They slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and took him to Babylon." Dan Jacobson's comment on this passage is very acute. He points out that Zedekiah's wickedness has been described, earlier in the same passage, as "he did what was evil in the sight of [literally, "in the eyes of"] the Lord". Thus,

The man who did evil in the eyes of the Lord suffers the punishment of having his own eyes put out; but only after they have witnessed the sight he would most have wished to be spared. Furthermore, through the murder of his own children, the fact that he is to be the very last, the end point, of a long line of such wrongdoing kings, is presented dramatically to him, so to speak, as well as to us, the readers of the tale.

Here, at the very outset of his book, Dan Jacobson comes as near as he ever does to the method of Robert Alter, who delights in drawing out of the biblical texts just such echoes and parallels, which are brought into play by stylistic devices of repetition that may look, to a critical sensibility schooled in classical rhetoric, like clumsy and primitive redundancy (elegant variation and syntactical subordination could easily rob the description of Zedekiah's punishment of half its force). But in this small example Jacobson sees a key to the ideological macrostructure of the Old Testament. It is:

an illustration of that sense of remorseless reciprocity governing the processes of history which seems central to the biblical writers' moral and imaginative life, and hence to the best way to apprehend the real profundity, subtlety and complexity of their meanings, which are often overlooked or obscured by the positivist historical approach of modern biblical scholarship.

In the account of Zedekiah's unsuccessful rebellion against Babylon, Jacobson is struck by the way that defeat for Israel is presented as a victory for Yaweh, because Israel has shown itself unworthy of Yaweh's special protection. Thus the infidel Nebuchadnezzar becomes the instrument of God, and the Israelites are punished for their sins by a symmetrical inversion of their first entry into the Promised Land.

That entry was achieved, Dan Jacobson reminds us in his next chapter, at the expense of the Promised Land's original inhabitants, the Canaanites; and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that he sees the entire "story of the stories" as growing from that germ, as a collective attempt to rationalize the guilt according to that land, the Jews are defined as a race divinely chosen, under the special protection of the one true God, who sanctions the deed by denouncing the Canaanites as evil idolaters: "You shall tear down their altars, and break their pillars, and cut down their Asherim..." (Exodus, 34: 13-16). When the Israelites themselves suffer the same fate, at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, this is ostensibly because they have failed to deserve Yaweh's special favour by obeying his law; but the reciprocity of the two events suggests a kind of inevitability, the working out of a primal curse, a move along to the Fate of pagan tragedy. "The explicit moral is that the people of Israel fall into God's disavour only when they disobey him; the tacit moral is that the very notion of having been chosen by such a God will produce the retribution appropriate to it."

Having invented a God who will sanction their territorial designs on other people, the Israelites become fearful of the power they themselves have invested in him. Dan Jacobson control it by the fiction of a Covenant. But the power cannot be tamed so easily. History being what it is, the Israelites will experience inevitable fluctuations of fortune in random and unpredictable ways, but have condemned themselves to read into these events a terrific weight of moral and metaphysical meaning, of pride and guilt. They become victims of their own historical myth - "that pitiless gain of the people of Israel has to be the loss of another, and vice versa, through all eternity". To escape this double bind, Judaism turned to apocalyptic fantasies of a world of peace and justice ruled over by a benevolent Jewish despotism, but this utopian promise was taken over by Christianity and developed, especially by Paul, in a new "story of the stories" in which the Jews were portrayed as having irredeemably forfeited God's favour by killing his Son - with grim historical consequences that we know all too well.

At the beginning of his study, Dan Jacobson puts his cards on the table: "If Yaweh is a human creation, as I believe him to be, then his actions and the utterances ascribed to him in his dealings with his people must reveal needs and fears which his creators could express in no other way." Jacobson's premises are atheistic and materialist. He is perfectly entitled to adopt this philosophical position, but two things must be said about it in the present context: (1) when applied to a discourse posited on the existence of God it will inevitably have a reductive and negative effect on interpretation; (2) it is just as much an assertion, and just as impossible to prove, as its opposite.

There is, however, a third position, which Dan Jacobson does not seem to allow for, and that is agnosticism. To acknowledge that religious concepts and propositions are not susceptible of scientific verification or falsification does not necessarily entail dismissing their claims to truth and value. Agnosticism maintains (or may choose to do so) a respectful humility before the transcendental world whose existence it doubts, and therefore provides a more constructive frame of mind than atheism in which to approach the Scriptures (I think, for instance, of Frank Kermode's *The Genesis of Secrecy*). And I would venture to suggest that if belief itself, whether Jewish or Christian, Muslim or Marxist, does not have within it an element of agnosticism, the end result is likely to be fanaticism and intolerance.

Dan Jacobson's opposition between atheism and religious belief, with nothing in between, is paralleled by an equally exclusive generic opposition implied in his book between history (which is plotless and established by a positivist science) and "story" (which is fictitious and the displaced expression of human desire and anxiety). Modern literary theory, however, has tended to see these ways of representing human action as two ends of the same continuum, with many gradations in between, rather than mutually exclusive and irreconcilable discourses. And one of the key points made by Alter is that the Old Testament narratives are a complex interweaving of fiction and history. He acknowledges, here, a debt to Herbert Schneider's *Sacred Discontent*, 1977, which speaks of the Bible as "historicized prose fiction", and

contrasts its essentially linear, causal, prosaic account of the history of the Israelites with the cyclical, analogical, mythopoetic character of most comparable writings of the ancient world - a view, aphoristically summarized in the Jakobsonian (not Jacobsonian) formula: "Where myth is hypotactic metaphors, the Bible is paratactic metonymies."

Dan Jacobson, who is arguing precisely the opposite case - that the Old Testament constitutes a total "myth" - would no doubt retort that the prophetic books are saturated with metaphor. And so they are. When one turns to the narrative passages of the Old Testament, however, Schneider's typification is more obviously persuasive. The description of Zedekiah's punishment is a good example: "they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah..." The lines have what Dan Jacobson rightly describes as "a certain punning quality". The first occurrence of *eyes* is a metonymy (the organ of sight standing for the faculty of sight), the second is literal; and it is the paratactic syntax (linking two grammatically equivalent clauses together by the conjunction "and" instead of subordinating one to the other in a hypotactic structure) that makes us apprehend the connection between the two with a sickening force. Heightened expression is achieved without disrupting spatio-temporal continuity.

Alter is not a structuralist, and is somewhat suspicious of Schneider's schematic formula. But he certainly thinks it is pointing in the right direction. It is, he says, "peculiar, and culturally significant" that among ancient peoples only Israel should have chosen to cast its sacred national traditions in prose, and he agrees that the Old Testament is characterized by a complex fusion of fiction and history.

Under scrutiny, biblical narrative generally proves to be either fiction laying claim to a place in the chain of causation and the realm of moral consequentiality that belongs to history, as in the primeval history, the tales of the Patriarchs and much of the Exodus story, and the account of the early Conquest, or history given the imaginative definition of fiction, as in most of the narratives from the period of Judges onward.

It was precisely this fusion of historical verisimilitude with the

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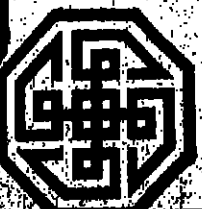
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John 1:1-18

psychological interiority and thematic patterning licensed by fiction that made the novel the dominant literary mode of the modern era. "The biblical authors were among the pioneers of prose fiction in the Western tradition," Robert Alter claims in his explanations that often seem very modern indeed – as alive to the possibilities of "spatial form" as Flaubert, as cunning in the manipulation of "point of view" as Henry James, as adept in the strategies of the "non-fiction novel" as Mailer or Capote. Applying a sophisticated critical sense sharpened on such literature, Alter finds expressive subtleties where conventional biblical scholarship finds only cruxes.

Take, for example, the story about Judah, the brother of Joseph, and his daughter-in-law, Tamar, which is interpolated in the middle of the story of Joseph himself, just after he is sold into slavery. This describes how the twice-widowed Tamar is denied by Judah her right to marry his third and youngest son, but gets satisfaction by posing as a prostitute and getting herself pregnant by Judah himself (thus bearing twins, one of whom will be the progenitor of David). Biblical commentators have been able to see no point in the embedding of this story in the middle of the Joseph story, but Alter demonstrates elegantly how one story mirrors the other, the deceiver Judah (who connived at the deception of Jacob regarding the fate of Joseph) being himself deceived, and his acknowledgment of this piece of poetic justice being forced upon him by a recognition of his own seat, cord and staff, which Tamar had extracted from him as a pledge of payment for her sexual services, just as the deception of his father was brought about by inviting him to recognize (the same verb is used in both stories) the bloodied coat of Joseph.

Gordon Leff

JEREMY COHEN

The Frisars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism 301pp. Cornell University Press. £17. 0 8014 1406 7

The position of the Jews in medieval society was peculiarly anomalous. Unlike the other main infidels – the Muslims – who, except for a time in Spain, were an external presence, the Jews lived within an exclusively Christian society. Unlike the different heretical groups, apart from the Cathars, they had not apostasized from Christianity, and they had not challenged it by asserting only to the Old Testament. Unlike both Muslims and heretics they played a crucial part in commercial life, especially in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and nowhere more than as financiers to kings and princes through their very immunity from Christian sanctions. The Jews were thus particularly vulnerable both religiously and economically and the object of continuing hostility. But it was only in the thirteenth century that there came to be an attack upon their existence as a separate community, both from the Church and by temporal rulers. They were condemned by popes, hurried by the Inquisition, their books burned, and, finally, beginning in England in 1290, they were expelled from some of the main kingdoms of Western Europe over the next 250 years.

Jeremy Cohen's book is concerned to trace the causes of these developments. He sees the necessary conditions in the growth of religious and political self-consciousness bringing a new emphasis upon unity and exclusiveness both within the Church and the developing states of the Middle Ages. That increased the pressure to conform and intolerance of deviant ideas and groups, which, in the case of the Jews, was accentuated by economic resentment from the new urban middle class. Hence the tolerance that they had long received from the Church, and the special protection afforded to them by rulers in their own self-interest, were undermined. But it was the new mendicant Dominican and Franciscan friars, drawn largely from the members of the urban middle class, who, according to Cohen, gave direct expression to these new tendencies. They were main agents in developing the medieval Christian awareness of the Jews as "mortal enemies".

Newly founded at the beginning of the thirteenth century, these orders engaged in a concerted effort to undermine the religious freedom and physical security of the medieval Jewish community. They did so as inquisitors, missionaries, disputants, polemicists, and itinerant preachers. This book provides an analysis of these roles by means of

concentrating on the story of the stories, he has done less than justice to the letter, he remarks that "They sustain this myth in many ways, not least by striving constantly, if never wholly successfully, to escape from it." This interesting observation is echoed, in a more positive form, by Alter, who argues that

causation in human affairs itself is brought into a paradoxical double focus by the narrative techniques of the Bible. The biblical writers obviously exhibit, on the one hand, a profound belief in a strong, clearly demarcated pattern of causation in history and individual lives, and many of the framing devices, the motifs-structures, the symmetries and recurrences in their narratives reflect this belief. God directs, history compiles; a person sins, a person suffers; Israel backslides, Israel falls. The very perception, on the other hand, of godlike depths, unsoundable capacities for good and evil, in human nature, also leads these writers to render their protagonists in ways that destabilize any monolithic system of causation, some of them complementary or mutually reinforcing, others even mutually contradictory.

From conversion to expulsion

Cohen also believes that the decisive change came in 1240 when, in response to the promptings of a Jewish convert to Christianity, Nicholas Dolin, Pope Gregory IX decreed the suppression and burning of the Jewish Talmud. Only St Louis, King of France, at the time complied and then only after a public disputation between Dolin and the Rabbi of Paris. (The number of books finally burned in 1242 of between 10,000 and 12,000 seems incredible.)

Those events inaugurated, according to Cohen, a new attitude towards the Jews which was intensified over the next century, largely under the aegis of the friars in those multiple roles already mentioned. Doctrinally the change consisted in the suppression of what Cohen calls the traditional Augustinian attitude to the Jews, which had seen them as witnesses to the truth of God's promises and so as necessary to his designs; despite all their impieties, for which God had punished them, they must therefore be tolerated. The new approach heralded in the events of the 1240s henceforth denied the Jews legitimacy on the fulfilment in the New Testament of the promises of the Old Testament, they had forsaken the latter, belief in which they had put the post-biblical teachings and commentaries of their rabbis contained in the Talmud, which justified their rejection of Christ as Messiah and the other articles of Christian faith. Through the Talmud they were therefore guilty of blasphemy. The Talmud now became the main object of Christian anti-Jewish activity, in the words of Gregory IX's decretal "the chief cause which holds the Jews obstinate in their perfidy". Practically, the 1240s inaugurated the banning and burning of the Talmud, and sermons denouncing involving Jews, and sermons delivered on Christian doctrines in their synagogues.

Cohen follows these developments until the time of the Black Death, in the middle of the fourteenth century, through individuals such as Raymond of Penafort, Nicholas of Lyre, Raymond Lull and a few of the more notable inquisitors and preachers, as representatives of the different facets of the friars' anti-Jewish activities. By then there were no Jews in England and France, among other countries, and a dwindling number elsewhere polemic continued in what was to be a continuing history of anti-Semitism.

Despite the careful documentation of its individual studies and the evidence, doubts about this book's approach remain. To begin with, apart from its introduction and substantial conclusions, it is concerned with specific individuals and cases. Of the figures examined, only Raymond of Penafort can be regarded as a truly representative and prominent member. Alter's order, it is true, that the missionary outlook which he presented as

shared by others discussed by Cohen. But, of those, Raymond Lull, for all his fame, was an aberrant. Yet he and other subjects of the book are repeatedly taken as the spokesmen for their order and as the expression of a particular development. Thus Nicholas of Lyre is made to reflect the growing acceptance in clerical and scholarly circles of the new anti-Jewish attitude which Cohen discerns in his writings. But it is just that evidence that such an attitude had now "successfully" entered the academic community and was "rapidly" gaining ground among the most prominent friars which is wanting. Nor is it immediately clear where would be found among the main Franciscans, obsessed by the issue of absolute poverty, or the Dominican scholars pursuing the classics and new ways in theology. Again, the structure of the book assumes a causal progression of anti-Judaism among its different subjects, so that Raymond Lull is seen as the natural outcome of Raymond of Penafort. But how many others advocated Lull's measures? Moreover, in their programme to convert the Jews and Arabs by reason, they were both anticipated by Alan of Lille a century earlier.

A similar tendency to treat premises as conclusions is to be seen in Cohen's criteria for judging significance and meaning. The most egregious case is his habit of treating conversion as synonymous with extinction and to compound the particular writer such as Raymond Lull or Nicholas of Lyre that he was advocating a Europe without Jews. That could have been so; but it first has to be proved. And what does one say about Christ or Augustine who both believed in conversion? So did Joachim of Fiore – and the Joachims – cited by Cohen as evidence of growing anti-Judaism. But if an earlier theologian can say that the Jews will be converted at the end of the world, why not after 1240, as Peter John Olivi and many of the Franciscan spiritualists did, without implying their extermination? A further complication in Joachim's case is that he wrote forty years before the change that came in the 1240s.

Another problem posed by Cohen's book is how to measure degrees of anti-Judaism. Because the twelfth-century writers whom he treats did not systematically invoke the Talmud as the source of Jewish perfidy, he does not regard them as the same threat to the Jews that the friars became. But in vehement nothing cited in Cohen's pages surpasses the denunciations of the friars in the twelfth century. Are they any less anti-Judaic or less calculated to incite hostility? At the same time, Peter Alphonsus came close as any later friar to advocating the physical destruction of the Jews in his appeal to the French king, Louis II, to turn to the Jews in his own kingdom, before going to fight the infidels.

Nor is it self-evident that what Cohen calls the "stagnant" view of

upon them, was less threatening than the more direct arguments developed by the friars in their disputations and analysis of Jewish texts. Greater sophistication is not the same thing as greater hostility. And stereotypes and abstractions often make the best targets.

There is also the practical consideration. It is undeniable that the friars, through the Inquisition (though its activities were more restricted than Cohen indicates) and their missionary vocation, helped to systematize opposition to the Jews and doubled helped to influence both popes and temporal rulers. But physical attack upon the Jews, as Cohen says, long antedated those developments. Since the pogroms which accompanied the First Crusade occurred in the time of the Augustinian doctrine, it may be wondered whether the friars did more than articulate a continuing legacy, rather than formulate a new programme of destruction.

Finally there is the book's perspective. Cohen commendably refrains from claiming a causal relationship between the friars and the growing exclusion of the Jews from Christian society. He sees them rather as the catalysts which fused those different tendencies to exclusion earlier mentioned. That does not entail, however, embracing the questionable view of some new middle class "who accorded legitimacy to the commercial and profit economy of the new towns". Neither order is intelligible in such terms. Far from legitimizing wealth and profit they, both arose from the renunciation of all worldly goods, however much they subsequently modified their original commitment to a life of poverty. Nor is the intellectual history of the thirteenth century any more intelligible from Cohen's contention that the friars were hostile to Aristotle and doctrinal innovation.

Rather than see the friars as the bearers of some new representative middle-class spirit which engaged them in the programme for the extermination of the Jews, fewer demands would be put upon credulity if we were asked to regard their anti-Jewish activities as one aspect of their apostasy which embraced both "believers and unbelievers". That involved them with Jews initially, as Professor Cohen says, only fortuitously – as it did with the Muslims and heretics; but hardly as part of a grand design which this book suggests.

Judaism on Trial: Jewish-Christian Disputations in the Middle Ages edited and translated by Hyman Maccoby (245pp. Ashgate University Press. £15. 0 8506 3063 1) is a new volume in the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. The five parts contain translated records of the Disputation of 1240 and the Disputation of 1413, the Disputation of 1415, and the Disputation of 1416. The volume is a valuable addition to the study of Jewish-Christian relations in the Middle Ages.



A woodcut of 1492 showing the alleged desecration of the Christ Host by Jews: reproduced from *The Sacred Executioner: Human Sacrifice and the Legacy of Guilt* by Hyman Maccoby (208pp. Thames and Hudson. £10.95. 0 500 01281 4) to be reviewed in a later issue of the TLS.

PSYCHOLOGY

At the master class

Peter Sedgwick

Reminiscences of a Viennese Psychoanalyst 184pp. Detroit: Wayne State University Press. \$17.50. 0 8143 1716 2

Richard Sterba was an important figure within "the second wave" of Freud's close associates in the foundation of institutionalized psychoanalysis in Vienna during the 1920s and early 1930s. He was also in frequent contact with the Freudian "old guard" of analysts like Otto Rank, Paul Fiedler, Theodor Reik, Helene and Felix Deutsch. Sterba points out that out of this earlier vanguard had undergone little or nothing in the way of a personal "training analysis". Within the second wave who, in a half-mockery of their elders, called themselves the "Kinderseminar" of psychoanalysis, Sterba seems to have been particularly close to Wilhelm Reich, with whom he collaborated in the establishment of Vienna's outpatient clinic for psychoanalytic treatment (open to patients without the means to pay for their therapy and assisted, at least for a while, by the city's Social-Democratic administration). Heinz Hartmann, the psychoanalytic methodologist, whose work Sterba observed to be oddly lacking in support from clinical material, Edward and Grete Bibring, Otto Fenichel, René Spitz, and Anna Freud, who acted as a link between the developing ideas of her father and the psychoanalytic generation of the 1930s.

The rivalry between the older

generation and the Kinderseminar was such that Richard Sterba's own training-analysis, a member of the senior group, forbade him to attend the latter's meetings, which were deemed to be too "unofficial". But within the councils of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, as well as in the international transactions of the Freudian therapists, older and younger adherents of the creed met and talked in relative freedom. Freud remained above these hostile undercurrents and, immobilized by cancer, attended only two meetings in 1926 as well as participating in some less formal sessions where he addressed a number of striking comments to Reik, Reich and Sterba himself. Sterba's notes on these impromptu interventions, on topics crucially important in the comprehension of psychoanalytic concepts, are among the most valuable features of the present memoir.

The younger members of the Vienna Society were, unlike the "old guard", highly malleable, and received Freud's theoretical innovations of the 1920s without resistance. (The break between Freud and the still older series of collaborators, Adler, Jung and Stekel, was of course by now a matter of ancient history to both camps.) Freud's theory, developed after the First World War, that human aggression is a drive in its own right, not merely a reaction to the frustration of libido, became (on Sterba's showing) an acceptable or at least a tolerable tenet within the Vienna group – though it was not accepted by the Marxist-inclined Reich. Again, in 1923, Freud proposed, in a radical departure, that the ego, far from being simply synonymous with the conscious and nearly conscious structures of the mind itself possessed deeply un-

conscious elements, and in 1926 he raised fresh and important ideas about the role of anxiety in neurotic conflict, anxiety now being considered as a danger-signal, motivating the ego to repress noxious instinctual strivings, rather than as the simple transformation of libido through repression.

Freud's replacement of the "transformation" theory of the nature of anxiety by the new "signal" theory of anxiety-generation has now become part of the common stock of Freudian ideas. The emphasis on ego-conflicts at the expense of the old monopoly of libido has also become an established development in the canon, despite the objections of Adorno, Marcuse and (more recently) Russell Jacoby to the deplorable loss of subversiveness once the lustful libido is downgraded in favour of that more reasonable moderator, the ego. Whatever the validity of these different contentions, it is clear that Freud's younger colleagues of the 1920s were able to make use of their master's latest ideas in a fairly productive manner.

But the appeal of *Reminiscences of a Viennese Psychoanalyst* does not depend at all on the reader's acceptance of this or that Freudian hypothesis about the psyche. It is above all an attractive human document, replete with pen-portraits and a sheaf of photographs of well-known psychoanalytic personages. One is struck by the number of independent women who came to the fore in the 1920s: Helene Deutsch, Annie Reich, Anna Freud, Grete Bibring, Marie Bonaparte and Editha Sterba. Apart from Reich, the socially progressive wing of the society is also well drawn and at the same time the compromises made by leading Berlin psychoanalysts with the Third Reich

after 1933 are clearly shown. In bidding farewell, during 1936, to the hapless German opportunist who managed the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute during its absorption by the Nazi régime, Freud sardonically instructed him: "You may make all kinds of sacrifices, but you must not make any concessions." The concessions to Nazism had already been made, with the collaboration of Freud's old rival C. G. Jung, and the sacrifices, in Vienna as in Berlin, became part of an involuntary holocaust.

One is left with a slight unease that the proceedings of the Vienna Society were dominated by a provisional alliance with a much more organic and impersonal medicine. Several of the leading analysts were beholden to the organicist Professor of Psychiatry in Vienna at the time, Wagner von Jauregg, whose massive use of electric

shock "therapy" on soldiers affected by war-neurosis was defended by Freud in 1920. Freud appears to have believed that the evolution of psychoanalytic technique in the 1920s was working against time, since physical medicine was surely in the process of discovering the means of a direct intervention upon the biochemical substrate of the neuroses. But, whatever the virtues of the chemotherapies it cannot be said that they have encouraged doctors to listen to the experiences of their patients. "Neurosis" has disappeared even as a descriptive concept from the latest *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in use among the American psychiatric profession; and with that dissolution of a classic idea, a vast project of sympathy and understanding, whose brave beginnings are recorded here by Richard Sterba, appears to have reached both a professional and a public impasse.

Benefits of hardship

Peter Lomas

ROLLO MAY

Freedom and Destiny 288pp. Norton. £10.50. 0 393 01477 0

Psychoanalysts have a tendency to come out from the consulting room and make large pronouncements on the condition of man. A cynic may conclude that, softened by a captive audience for their views on life, they overestimate their wisdom and originality; or that psychoanalysts are by nature preachers in disguise. More charitably, however, we may also conclude that, faced daily with people who are desperately searching for meaning, they are themselves forced to think hard about it, and they then write books as a consequence of their deliberations. This must especially be true of those, like Rollo May, who openly insist that (contrary to the belief of many practitioners) psychotherapy is concerned with morality rather than with science. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. How well does the author, who has no claim to special gifts or to philosophical training, emerge from this exploration into human destiny?

Rollo May is one of a group of American psychoanalysts which includes Abraham Maslow, Victor Frankl and Leslie Farber, often referred to as Existential Psychoanalysts, who draw their intellectual inspiration from Kierkegaard, Buber, Tillich and Binswanger, among others. They depart from Freud in their belief that his work was limited by a nineteenth-century view of man as a mechanism, and his failure to recognize that anxiety is a natural response to the horror of life and the fact of death, and should therefore be accepted as such rather than analysed as a neurotic defence against sexual and other conflicts. It is a line of thought which has brought much common sense to the field of psychoanalysis and has helped to counteract the intellectual biases which Freud brought to his findings. Some of these ideas have now found their way – usually unacknowledged – into mainstream psychoanalytic practice but without any recognition that their acceptance requires a fundamental change in beliefs.

May appears to be wise, thoughtful, experienced and human, someone to whom one could entrust a sick person with confidence, knowing that he would listen and care and would not indoctrinate or fill his client with jargon. I would stake a bet that he gets good results. Yet there is disappointingly little in this book about his work. Quotations abound, and are apt and interesting, but they come from philosophers and poets rather than from fellow practitioners. It is perhaps for this reason that the themes on which he dwells – love, will, freedom, death – are subjected to too easy generalization; those familiar with this school of thought will soon feel that they have been here before.

In *Freedom and Destiny* May does, however, attempt to show how

frustration. By "destiny" he refers to the "givens" in life: the limitations to our hopes and ambitions which take precedence over questions of morality. We evade our destiny to our cost. We should accept it (which does not mean sitting back passively to await a predetermined fate) rather than tracking down the imaginary causes of our miseries. This appeal to stoicism is perhaps nearer to Freud's concept of the "reality-principle" than May would care to accept. It is in times of the utmost deprivation, he believes, that we can freely become ourselves and accept our destiny. From suffering comes strength and creativity. He quotes a prisoner in San Quentin gaol, who said:

They have separated me from my family, deprived me of touching my young boy. They have hidden the sun, moon and stars from my view, exchanged their concrete and steel for earth and flowers and everything warm and soft . . . They have left me with nothing except an inner core, a secret, private place they have not yet found how to get to.

May is undoubtedly right that facing up to and surviving an apparently hopeless position can strengthen our sense of identity. When we hear of those who achieve this task in conditions of terrible hardship we are ourselves inspired. But the implication that hardship is good for us, that it is the means by which we can grow, leaves out of account those the majority – who do not survive in such conditions, who are broken, crippled or killed. Is there not a danger of romanticizing hardship? Moreover how does May reconcile this line of thought with that of Winnicott, one of the very few psychoanalysts to whom he gives recognition and approval, and who is well known for his belief that it is a "facilitating environment" that promotes creativity in the child and healing in the patient? Should we careen our children and our patients or should we knock them for six? The answer, surely, is that such questions are too general, that we need to respond intuitively to each situation. Even so, an emphasis on the value of hardship can very easily lead itself to hypocrisy (the well-heeled politician who believes that the threat of unemployment is salutary). Moreover, if one really accepted the thesis that deprivation leads to creativity, should we not act on this belief? But often, just at the point when the questions become interesting, the author passes on to another subject.

Rollo May writes fluently and clearly. There is no trace of the self-indulgent passion for obscurity with which some of the leading thinkers in the field of psychoanalysis have, unhappily, succeeded in bemusing us in recent times. But in spite of the fact that he shows himself to be acquainted with grief and is under no illusion that the world is perfect, his tone is consistently bland. The obvious is stated, too often and we crave, after a while, for something rougher and more spiky. The outrageous comment, the occasional indiscretion, the revealing acknowledgment of frailty, the sharp

The power of the poppy

Alethea Hayter

DAVID T. COURTWRIGHT

Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America before 1940 270pp. Harvard University Press. £14. 0 674 19261 3

"Most impatiently did she await the injection" wrote a physician of a neurotic female, "always exclaiming as I entered – 'Oh doctor, shoot me quick!'" This is the typical American opium addict of the 1860s, likely to be a middle-aged middle-class white woman in one of the Southern States, given morphine by her doctor. The typical addict of the 1930s is a New York boy from a broken home, who learned to sniff heroin from a group of other boys before he was in his teens, and a few years later was arrested for financing his habit by selling the drug to others.

The shift in age, sex, class and often colour between the typical nineteenth and twentieth-century addicts has often been attributed to the introduction of anti-narcotic legislation, particularly the Harrison Act of 1914 which, as later interpreted by the courts, forbade "maintenance" supplies to addicts, and thus forced them to turn to the black market, and some historians of the period have seen this legislation as a piece of class discrimination against a working-class population justified by the misery of their condition (a similar suggestion was made recently in relation to British working-class addicts by Virginia Berne).

David T. Courtwright will have none of this; his version of American addiction history is different. Supporting his account by detailed statistics, he shows that the great majority of nineteenth-century addicts to opium and morphine were (most of those who became addicts) "old" – that is, middle-aged or older – and that they were mostly white. He also shows that the great majority of those who became addicts were (most of them) "poor" – that is, of the lower social classes. He also shows that the great majority of those who became addicts were (most of them) "addicted" – that is, they were not simply using the drug but were fully dependent on it. He also shows that the great majority of those who became addicts were (most of them) "addicted" – that is, they were not simply using the drug but were fully dependent on it.

arthritis or syphilis – in the form of opium, by hypodermic injection from the 1860s on. Addiction so caused reached its peak in the 1890s, but already doctors had become aware of the dangers, and by about 1910 iatrogenic addiction was fast disappearing.

Meanwhile a very different type of addict was gradually emerging. From about 1850 Chinese immigrants had introduced opium-smoking in California. These addicts took opium for euphoria, not for health, and it was a social activity, practised in groups, and therefore contagious. Forty years later black stevedores in New Orleans began taking cocaine to strengthen themselves for their back-breaking labour. Opium-smoking and cocaine-taking both spread to white users, generally of the criminal class. Cocaine, these habits, and the later opium-sniffing, were practised gregariously – unlike the secretised solitary iatrogenic habit of the morphine addicts – so this kind of addiction spread as the other sort waned, until it became dominant, and stringent laws against it began to be called for, thus driving it still further underground into black-market abysses. "The law did not create the underworld addict, but it did aggravate his behaviour."

In putting forward this version of addiction history, Courtwright does not appear to be grinding any particular axe, or propounding one type of addiction more than another. He mentions at the outset that he himself is in favour of some form of legal supply of drugs; but that is not the concern of this book, which is to put the record straight, to provide accurate historical data on which future decisions about addiction legislation and treatment might be based. Courtwright does not believe that any type of personality is more prone to addiction than any other; he is of access to opiates, not the character of those who have recourse to them, that is the determining cause. His main contention, supported by formidable arrays of statistics and facts, is that the statistics of addiction in America are based on a faulty methodology. He argues that the statistics of addiction are based on a faulty methodology. He argues that the statistics of addiction are based on a faulty methodology. He argues that the statistics of addiction are based on a faulty methodology.

Handwritten text in a box, possibly a signature or a note, written in cursive script.

Client relationships

Lorna Sage

PAUL BAILEY

An English Madam: The Life and Work of Cynthia Payne
166pp, with black-and-white photographs. Cape. £7.50.
0 224 02037 4

"Madame Cyn" shouted the headlines: "luncheon vouchers", "Streatham". It was somehow obvious from the start that Cynthia Payne's "disorderly house" was not the usual idiosyncrasy that it was, on the contrary, bizarrely orderly. As details of Cynthia's domestic economy emerged the curious subculture of "Cranmore" looked, in fact, so exactly an inversion of the banalities of middle-class existence that legal outrage seemed absurd. It wasn't just a matter of the 10p and 15p vouchers clutched by the queue of middle-aged-to-elderly clients on the stairs (though these puzzled the police); nor of the clients' own professions - church, civil service, politics, the bar. As Cynthia's trial and appeal (plus her recent confessions in the *News of the World*) have revealed, her Streatham brothel was not a house but a home, a place where the repressions of everyday life were reflected in a fun-house mirror. And she herself was that most English of institutions, a "character". Hence Paul Bailey's splendid study, *An English Madam*, which removes Cynthia (with her willing cooperation) out of the commercial underworld, and installs her in a niche in the Dickensian tradition of social fantasy.

There is after all, Mr Bailey insists, a certain similarity between Cynthia's role and that of, say, Mrs Tudders in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. She is the landlady as comic genius loci, the "hostess" restored to matronly dignity. Consider the management skills involved: the house, for instance, was cleaned by "Philip", who paid Cynthia a modest sum to stand over him with a switch and compel him to clean (he always accidentally missed a tiny corner. Roughly the same arrangement, with "Rodney", took care of the large garden. Drinks were served by the ex-Squadron leader, disguised as the butler (or judging from his photograph) Theda Bara as the mood took him. Sometimes a noted political commentator helped out as "Tweeny", and was spanked by Theda Bara for answering back. "Gregory" provided an advice-sheet on the apparatus of domination ("WIG: as most dominants are blonde, a platinum wig or hairpiece worn to show below the helmet, is stated"). Once, the bank manager, a difficult customer who could never be humiliated enough, was brought to the verge of ecstasy when pelted with the contents of the Hoover, which Philip had been warned to fill to bursting. More conventional clients watched blue movies, and "went upstairs" when they felt like it. The party atmosphere was maintained by a system of paying (£25) on entry (hence the famous vouchers), with discounts for pensioners and the impecunious.

It all sounds like an inspired experiment in energy saving, with Cynthia ("Lady Duma") as she was known to the help, though the Squadron Leader, an old friend, called her "Madam Baloney" orchestrating the follies like a benevolent deity. The carnival spirit however, depended - as carnival spirit tends to - on the conviction, shared by Cynthia and her party-goers, that the world outside Cranmore was an alien, bleak, unaccommodating place. If Mr Bailey's instincts as a writer led him to the nineteenth century it must have been partly because Cranmore was a kind of time-machine, a refuge from the present where, for example, second childhoods were catered for (again very Dickensian), and where it was taken for granted that your little ways and wants might be entirely out of sync with the greyish person who'd "settled down" or "grown old". It's exactly what the set-up resembles a Victorian comedy of humours: a lot of the time it is one, and the intensity of the illusion is a measure of the futuristic bleakness, to Cranmoreans, of the supposedly permissive society. What they wanted was the delicious unfreedom - meaning in their socks, with tickets;

poached eggs on toast afterwards - of living in the past, not necessarily their own past, though some of the fantasies are very specific, but a collective daydream of early life.

Cynthia understood all this so well, apparently, because her own early life (in fact, her first thirty-odd years) had been fairly unrelievedly awful. As the book's hilarious account of the historic police raid modulates into the story of her experiences before she found her vocation and acquired her house, the party atmosphere is rapidly dissipated. In many ways we still seem to be in the nineteenth century, but now the ambience is less English, more Maupassant, Cynthia's mother died young, in 1943, and her father, whom she and her sister hardly knew (he'd been a hairdresser on the cruise liners) wasn't well-equipped to cope alone, though he had to, since potential second wives found his girls too difficult, and his own conscious respectability cut him off from the sort of surrounding support his working-class background might have provided. Each sister reacted in her own way -

Cynthia "ran wild", used bad language, and displayed a generous curiosity about sex. Melanie became sensible and "posh" (and married a police inspector). As "Cinders" drifted away from home on the south-east coast and into London (failed hairdresser, waitress, unmarried mother) she seems, by her own account, to have lost control of her life with frightening speed. She semi-starved for a season in a squalid basement with a derelict who "looked like Christie", though all he did was, harmlessly, to collect other social casualties into a family of sorts. Her men seem to have been either father-substitutes (though penniless and inept) or only managed one "sugar daddy" or sexy spivs like "Sam", who worked in the amusement arcade, and got her pregnant with nightmarish regularity.

This is a twilight world of female drudgery (wailing pregnancies), of more-or-less lost children (for her first son she arranged fostering, her second was adopted), of abortions and sexual fear. Only as the news her destiny as a Madam does Cynthia seem to be a person at all. Indeed, she never is quite a person, she moves from un-

person to personage (via a short and unpleasant spell on the game herself) in a most disconcerting fashion. As a casualty of family life, and an exile from it, she is a self-made expert in the weird, nostalgic fantasies about domesticity that set the tone at Cranmore. Perhaps the point is made most painfully and absurdly when her long-strangled father, lonelier than ever, and now an old man, becomes one of her party-goers, and joins the queue on the stairs. This is, in a way, Cynthia's moment of triumph, the closing of the magic circle. She provides the home from home, a haven for refugees from the respectable world she couldn't live in, and becomes herself a motherless Mother Superior. (House rules excluded men under forty - "Old men are more appreciative" - and her "girls" were chosen because they did it for love as well as money.)

And so we return to the domain of Madam Baloney, the hilarity by now slightly shadowed, the humour blacker. Cynthia has preserved letters from her clients specifying their wants, and a selection of the most picturesque of these forms the funniest part of the book. A methodical diplomat describes in enormous detail how the lady of his dreams ("aged 38-46 if possible, and preferably English [including Jewish], otherwise European, blonde or brunette") is to create the precise quality that turns him on: "a very strong, natural odour coming through her blouse from under her arms". A firer instructions about not washing and so on, he continues:

My request is really quite a simple one and not really all that demanding, if you consider that less than 100 years ago, when ladies seldom took a bath and scent was too costly for most people to afford, it was considered perfectly normal for ladies to smell of 'B.O.' . . .

And he hints darkly at tortures of the damned on the rush-hour tube of a hot summer's evening. Others are briefer, and perhaps less sincere:

Honoured Partygoer,
Can you supply a nun at your next shindig? Severe face and Irish accent for preference.

Yours beatifically,
"Decameron George"
What they all have in common is

longing for that lost past, that time before they grew up and became insurance men or vicars or whatever, when women dominated and enveloped them.

Many can only do it when reminded of Nanny ("Who's been a naughty boy then?"). Some hanker after housework as the only really exciting thing, like the retired police superintendent who pursues one of Cynthia's "girls" back home to Somerset to clean her oven in the nude, while "Agatha" whips away. "Agatha", in fact, comes dangerously close to enjoying her work: "I thought of all those years washing my husband's socks and underpants, cooking his meals, waiting on him hand and foot, and it suddenly gave me a lovely feeling, punishing that policeman." But this isn't Cynthia's line: she never married, after all, and is more disinterested, "unswervingly loyal", indeed, Bailey discovers, "the curious notion that the male is the superior of the species". When they left her house, they returned to their dog-collared or pin-striped adult disguises, and (you realize, with a dazed feeling) to running the society we live in.

Paul Bailey, I think, relished his task because he saw in Cranmore's alternative economy a satire on normalcy, and more specifically on the family as an institution. Cynthia provided a place where "earnest obsessionists" could painlessly (unless they insisted) act out their quirky emendations on the family scenario, and thus unwittingly proclaim (as it turned out) the quiet insanity of English life and manners. The satiric effect is, however, in the end overlaid with a rather different one: a sense that this particular comic subculture is autonomous, endemic, changeless. Cranmore's world reflects remarkably few of the things that are supposed to have happened to relations between the sexes in the last hundred years.

Except of course that they can be written about - something Bailey here does marvelously well. For the rest, it's as though the only testimonies to a century of hectic change are roll-on deodorants, Philip's Hoover, and assorted electronic gadgets, littering a family mansion still really inhabited by our great-grandfathers in short trousers, or, possibly, skirts.

Cui bono?

Dervla Murphy

IAN MORSEHEAD

The Life and Murder of Henry Morsehead: A True Story from the Days of the Raj
207pp. Cambridge: Oleander Press. £10.50.
0 9008971 76 9

In May 1931 the nine-year-old Ian Morsehead and his brother Hugh, aged ten, were summoned to the Headmaster's study at Horris Hill, Newbury, and informed that their father, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Morsehead, DSO, RE, had been shot dead while riding through the Burmese jungle near Maymyo. Not long before, Hugh and Ian, with their mother Evelyn, their little sister Audrey and two younger brothers had returned to England from Burma, where Henry Morsehead had been appointed Director, Burma Circle, Survey of India.

On May 19, 1931 the *Rangoon Gazette* printed a statement issued by the Commissioner of Police, Mandalay Division: "Various theories have been advanced as to the cause of the murder. It is impossible to say as yet what the real cause is. There is, however, no evidence at all to connect the attack with rebel activity. Two arrests have already been made and a reward of Rs 1,000 has been offered for information leading to the discovery and conviction of the murderer."

Eventually the arrested men were released, and on August 21 the Government of Burma, through the India Office, Whitehall, reported that "The enquiries led to no result and the authorities are forced to the conclusion that the case must remain a mystery". But this conclusion has never satisfied Ian Morsehead, who believes that there was something oddly furtive about the official attitude to his father's murder. He writes: "Why should someone leading such a very ordinary life be murdered? I puzzled? Who stood to benefit? This uneasy suspicion that justice had not been done eventually it seems - became an obsession with Mr Morsehead. In 1981, fifty years after the event, he returned to India and Burma to seek some plausible motive for the murder of his father.

The blurb informs us that "In one of the most gripping biographies of recent years, rivalling any thriller for its excitement and murder mystery, Ian Morsehead has charted the life of his famous father, who attempted Everest and K2, and died in bizarre circumstances at Maymyo, Burma". If there isn't a lay against such misleading blurbs, there should be. Even Agatha Christie could not have made this murder mystery into a thriller because all the essential ingredients, apart from a dead body, are absent.

The blurb also quotes Raleigh Trevelyan - "Fascinating and startling, a son's quest with a dramatic end, and a careful reconstruction of the life of a distinguished civil servant and mountaineer in the India of the 1920s. That 'dramatic end' must surely qualify as the anti-climax of the year. It consists of no more than a shared bazaar gossip, hinting at a dare between the author's maiden aunt and Syed Ali, manager of the local Electric Supply Company. There is no proof that Ruth Morsehead ever formed such a relationship, yet Ian Morsehead builds a theory - founded solely on a rumour vaguely recalled by a girl in 1981 - that Henry Morsehead was murdered by an assassin in the pay of the businessman, Syed Ali.

Mr Morsehead has done an immense amount of research into the life of his courageous and endearing father, who was among the greatest of the early twentieth century Himalayan explorers and surveyors. But not by research alone do books live. Neither the author nor his father - from whose letters Ian quotes at too great length - shows the faintest glimmer of literary skill; and the result is a book of incomparable stoddiness. But an attempt on Everest can sound heroic when Henry Morsehead describes it in letters to his adored wife. And Ian, a life of Henry and Eve, which includes a rare distillation of all that was tedious in British India.

ACTON

Terminal triptych

Eric Korn

ANTHONY BURGESS

The End of the World News
207pp. Hutchinson. £8.95.
0 09 130540 2

"Would he had blotted a thousand", said Ben Jonson, and though he meant it in love and honesty (this side history), he gave a weapon to every conflicted or constipated writer, or would-be writer, in the face of the stealer's gush of someone else's creative energy. So, when Anthony Burgess produces three books in about three months, to say nothing of all these symphonies and operas and a stream of lively reviews and who knows what he does in his spare time (his catamans?) acts as economic aid to the government of (Mexico?), there is a temptation to say - again with Ben - "he flowed with that gush that sometimes it was necessary to be stopped". But I think it is impertinence to tell someone else how best to dispose of his time; and I'd rather have a new Burgess than not have a new Burgess: the man, luckily for me, blots where he listeth.

And now we have, to quote the poet, (for Burgess cannot be

confined within his own covers and "the author himself, who is not all shame, is acting as his own puff"?) not one but "three fascinating stories bound together". The three separate or rather separable but interlocked narrative strands reflect "the new way of reading, derived from the new way of watching television. To view one channel at a time is no longer enough". (So if there are signs here and there of hurry, it's doubtless because Burgess had to get published before the advent of Channel Four made another subplot, or rather co-plot, necessary. What will he do when forty-channel cable arrives?)

It would be churlish not to continue to refer to Burgess's obliging explication of his own intentions and methods, without stopping to consider the precise anatomical position of his tongue at the time of writing. The three stories are "the same story: they are all about the end of history as man has known it". They also concern the "three greatest events of our century": Freud, Trotsky and Space Travel. (He might, we feel sure, have chosen Einstein, Joyce and Television, or Crick, Castro and Computer Science, and had just as much fun: Joyce, indeed, makes a tangential appearance, refusing a free analysis with Jung in a Zürich cafe, while at the next table Lenin wonders why he

hasn't heard from Trotsky recently).

The outermost narrative tissue is a pastiche catastrophe plot: in the not-distant future, when the citizens of the Commonwealth of the Democratic Americas communicate by biophone and anomic Teuprots rampage in the streets, the earth is threatened by the onrush of the wandering planet Lynx (its name a compromise between the rival claimants Marx and Lynch) which is about to drown the coastal lands in thousand-foot tides, set off earthquakes world-wide and abduct the moon before swinging around the sun and returning for a second and fatal swipe. Fortunately, the protagonist, Valentine Brodie, a representative of dying humanity as well as dying *lit hum* and, as luck will have it, a writer of science fiction (which he calls "science or fuffic" in order to distress the pedant) is on hand to observe, record and to survive.

Brodie has the misfortune of being married to the ouranologist Vanessa Frame, a woman of awe-inspiring beauty, intelligence, passion and sexual skills; at least awe is what the mad despot Bartlett, and his team of "astromoniologists", a teasing Burgess coinage for "thugs".

For Sigmund Freud, the end of the world takes the form of cancer of the eye, exile from his loved and hated Vienna, and endless waking and dreaming rumination on past errors or betrayals. Driven out by the Nazis, he is likewise pursued by phantasms; the victims of his panacea, cocaine; the Rat-man and his fellows; the quarrelsome Viennese, the hostile colleagues, Adler, Jung, Stekel, treacherous disciples, castrating sons. Though played for broad comedy and broad pathos - Freud on the platform two hours before the train, surrounded by squalling children - these episodes are moving, filled with insights, and essentially fair, though many



Freudians and all Jungians will take offence.

We know what the end is going to be for Freud; but Brodie's fate is full of surprises, farcical concatenations and coincidences and an unhoped-for victory for Our Side. The fictionalized Freud, like the fictional Brodie, is one flawed hero, an ironic survivor: the one survives his own doubts and death, the other survives the destruction of humanity; a qualified, ambiguous but indisputable triumph.

The third narrative strand, much the slightest, sheds little light on an obscure period of Trotsky's life - his sojourn in New York around 1917. It is presented as the fragmentary libretto of a sort of radical counterpart to *Springtime for Hitler* - *Bedtime with Bronstein* perhaps. The lyrics, which will sound wonderful in the stage presentation that Burgess may at this very moment be perfecting, are noteworthy on the page only for acute

enjambement, a comic effect that wears out.

The stormy grey Atlantic is afire with U-boats. The Brooklyn yards are frantically building new boats. Like any Burgess novel, *The End of the World News* is stuffed with relevant and irrelevant raisins, from a new translation of that celebrated Pushkin poem that also appears in *Honey for the Bears* to an apocalyptic vision of the watery end of New York, by way of a character who prevents premature ejaculation by muttering a mantra based on the formula for monosodium glutamate (at least Burgess says it's glutamate though it sounds more like the succinate salt to me).

Burgess doesn't follow Graham Greene's old practice of distinguishing novels from entertainments: the two functions are inextricably woven, for better or worse, in the rich and riotous utterances of this incomparably energetic prophet and farceur.

Ayamonte/Vila Real

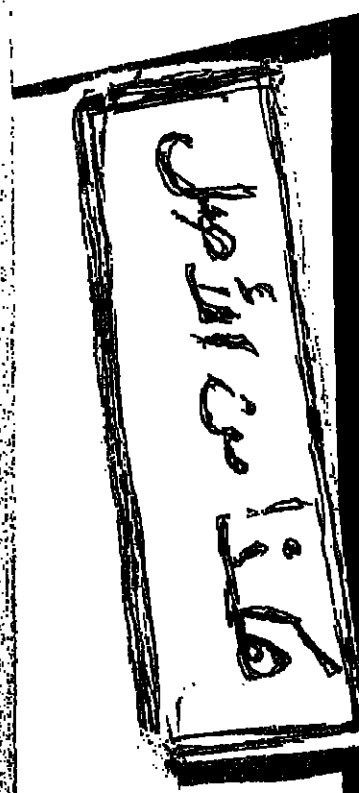
Who has not seen the colours on the last evening strangely intensified and heard the final, untranslatable syllables of the taxi-driver cursing the cyclist? Then lights a cigarette: there'll be time enough to learn what you do, without ever learning enough to do right; nor can you return through the labyrinth - what child's play it seems now! - regathering the thread to the point at which it simply might never have been needed.

But sometimes you say goodbye without ever really meaning it: between bouts of love, even in the gap between two words that are themselves harmless as wooden fence posts driven in on either side of an invisible dotted line.

Here, at least there is a river to be crossed in a ferry whose tickets may be paid for in either currency. Women gather in the saloon, comparing their purchases of butter, say, or a roll of imported cloth; that on their own side is heavily taxed; the captain fingers his worry-beads, and the stranger paces the deck between stern and bows and back again, and back again, at last looks up to the daunting gulls and wishes only he had bread to scatter.

Better this than waking in trains to find you have already left without having properly taken account of the last village, village street and weathercock that, even as you watch, begins to turn.

Charles Boyle



A place to come from

Patricia Craig

HENRY GLASSIE

Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History of an Ulster Community. 85pp. £25. 0 86278 015 2

Irish Folk History: Folktales from the North 161pp. £8. 0 86278 015 0

Dublin: O'Brien Press

"Ballymenone's modest homes stand around me as wondrous revelations of their creators' minds." Henry Glassie writes at one point in his massive study of the habits and habitations of a small Ulster community. By this he means that the dwellings he examined in County Fermanagh are constructed in accordance with a practical design and that their internal arrangements reflect certain traditional patterns of living — the kitchen, for example, where neighbours gather, being still the most important room.

The overstatement is typical of Glassie's anthropological method. In the commonest action performed in Ballymenone he finds cosmic implications. "A text", he tells us (he means the text of a story related in a Ballymenone kitchen), "like a season, like a cell or a lifetime, is a segment of eternity. It exists at once as a whole and as part of a larger whole." This is an example of a statement so "meaningful" that it actually means very little. Glassie's book abounds in these.

Considered as a documentary undertaking, however, *Passing the Time* is an impressive piece of work. Henry Glassie has found a great deal to note, record, absorb and relish in his chosen locality. Ballymenone is a rural area in Fermanagh, lying along the western side of Upper Lough Erne, seven miles north and nine miles east of the border with the Republic. It consists of low hills, bogs and scattered townlands. In 1972, when he began his research, Glassie, a professor of folklore at the University of Pennsylvania, counted forty-two households in the district, thirty-three Catholic and nine Protestant. The majority of these gained a livelihood from farming.

Over the next seven years, whenever he was able to visit Ballymenone, Glassie immersed himself thoroughly in the life of the countryside, observing and examining local practices in working, the land, constructing farmhouses and outbuildings and "passing the time". "A man standing at an open door would be wasting time, but leaning on the half-door he is just passing time" — this tongue-in-cheek observation, offered to E. Estyn Evans and quoted in his classic study *Irish Folk Ways*, explains the use of the phrase Glassie has chosen for his title. It has to do with finding ways of making time pass fruitfully and agreeably.

Chief among these is the ceil, the gathering of neighbours in a local kitchen for a bout of merry-making, with singing and storytelling well to the fore. This is usually a rough-and-ready affair, full of banter and good humour, with vigorous approval for every performance; when Glassie is present, however, the "entertainment strains to the transcendence of Holy Communion". He makes a "sacred mystery" out of the business of drinking a cup of tea with your neighbours, listening to a comic song or just enjoying the "crack".

The idea that the hearth is at the heart of things is not a new one — in old parlour, sentimental songs of a type still appreciated in Ballymenone, you were always being adjured to fight for your "hearties and ulters" — but in Glassie's hands it undergoes an apotheosis. "The one becomes the all at the center", he tells us. And: "Fire centers space, brings common life into time's flow, and burns away categorical disjunction". He explains: "By day it unifies the work of men and women, blending outside work and inside work into food consumed by people seated in a semicircle around the front window or the hearth."

Having been inflamed by the fire, Glassie goes on to make a meal of the kitchen: "Like turf, tea and soap are eaten into life's stream running through the kitchen." Noting the fact that inherited delphic ornaments require frequent washing, he remarks: "As tea is fed guests, soapy water is fed the ancestors."

The people of Ballymenone appear to have borne up well under the strain of having their footsteps dogged by an overwhelmed anthropologist with his sights fixed on infinity. The Flanagan brothers, Hugh Nolan, Ellen Cutler and Michael Boyle, all of them well over seventy and all natives of the district, were Glassie's principal informants, but many other local families, such as the Owens and the Murphys, offered help whenever they could. Ballymenone's storytellers, unlike the *seanchuidhe* of Gaelic-speaking districts, prefer the plain account of a local exploit to the convoluted wonder-tale, though their repertoire includes the doings of the saints (St Patrick, St Columba and so on) as well as some supernatural occurrences, all highly entertaining. (Glassie sometimes makes mistakes in his transcriptions; I do not believe, for example, that Peter Flanagan would have referred to the legendary architect of the Giant's Causeway as Phil McCool, or that the singer of the well-known "Sean O'Farrell" would have inserted a piece of gibberish — "naboshte" — in place of the simple Gaelic term "mo bhuachaill" — my boy — which occurs in the second line.)

History, to a certain extent, has been preserved orally in the locality; the tale of Black Francis, for example, which Mr Nolan and Mr Flanagan recounted for Glassie, goes back to the period following the Williamite wars at the end of the seventeenth century, when the countryside was swarming with outlaws and rapacious, those dispossessed in earlier confiscations as well as the disbanded soldiers of Sarsfield's army. Among their number was Black Francis, a local hero hanged at Enniskillen, and his associate Soule Corragan of the great leap, who escaped to make his way to America.

Striking achievements like Corragan's jump (he leapt the Sillees River, twenty feet at its narrowest point) form a natural part of Ballymenone's mythology, making anecdotes that, as Glassie has it — for once succinct and shrewd — "celebrate the excellence of the District's people". Mrs Timoney's prodigious trek is another spectacular accomplishment that gets due recognition in the area. Preserved since the nineteenth century and still current, this story upholds the spirit that enabled a hard-pressed widow to walk forty miles to pay her rates, and make nothing of it. Fortitude and hardihood are creditable characteristics. So is belligerence in a good cause. 1829, the year of Catholic Emancipation, is remembered in Ballymenone for a faction fight which took place on Mackan Hill on July 13 (the "twelfth" that year fell on a Sunday). Orangemen's tents and threats — Ballymenone at the time, according to Michael Boyle's account, was "very terribly Protestant populated" — brought a counter-attack from poor Catholics brandishing pitchforks; the latter won the day, with four deaths to their credit (Catholic versions of the story are told in a spirit of commendation for bravery — the Orangemen were armed with guns — and honourable defiance). Those concerned were arrested and sentenced to execution; one was hanged before a relieved time came through. It's a stirring story, and Glassie is always ready to be stirred. "As people are treated unjustly, they will justly rebel", he says. "Farmers with pitchforks, lads with bombs, will face death, bring death."

To call bombers *lads* implies something about your attitude to their activities; to place them in a direct line following on from sturdy folk-heroes of the past indicates a failure to consider whether or not social abuses still exist, and if they do, whether the terrorist atrocity makes a satisfactory antidote to them. In common with many others, Glassie deplores the presence of "horrible machines of war screaming daily through [Ballymenone's] gentle hills" (he means armoured cars); we

find very little, however, about the internecine confrontations that brought them there. Indeed, Glassie seems to have found curiously little evidence of political animosity in Ballymenone (perhaps because the bulk of his information is filtered through the consciousness of an older, less hot-headed generation); what he has hearteningly found, as Benedict Kiely did in the Co. Tyrone of his childhood, is that neighbourliness is of more consequence than sectarian affiliation.

The last "historical" event to pass into the district's oral culture is the Brookeborough Raid of 1957 which resulted in the death of two IRA men, Sean South and Feargal O'Hanlon, both subsequently commemorated in hastily composed songs. (A very garbled "Sean South" appears here, in which the singer has simply forgotten his words; it's an incomplete version, not, as Glassie asserts, a version peculiar to the district.) An earlier and more engaging political jingle was recited by Mrs Cutler:

Sir Edward Carson had a cat,
And every time he fed the cat
It cried out, No Surrender.

De Valera had a cat,
He fed it on a plate,
And every time he hit the cat,
It shouted, Up Free State.

Glassie does well to quote this, and he would have done better to let it speak for itself; however, as we might expect, he is quickly on to its deeper import. "Become a follower, the individual becomes a housecat, a kept beast", he solemnly explains. "Shouting slogans, he leaves neighborliness for bitterness and loses membership in the human community. To be human is to own a soul . . ." So it goes on.

In a place so wet that men once walked about on stilts to keep out of the mud, it's not surprising that the weather should loom large as a topic of conversation, even to the point of providing, in many people's minds, a reflection of current instability and political deadlock. The nineteenth-century Tyrone novelist William Carleton effectively converted weather and landscape into a moral force (especially in *The Black Prophet*), and Fermanagh's Shan Bullock followed suit, bringing in everything dark, rotten and ominous to reinforce a troubled narrative mood. "It was a wet season, full of mists and floods, the hills sodden to the roots, the lowlands dank and blighted," Bullock, incidentally, in his novels of the Lough Erne region (popularized by what he calls "the slow-blooded Loughsiders"), sets out in the clearest possible way the opposing qualities traditionally associated with Protestant and Catholic Ulster — industriousness and fecklessness, wildness and steadiness of behaviour. Uplands are Catholic, lowlands Protestant. This makes for drama, but it's a form of stereotyping that Glassie sensibly discounts. "Probably", he says of those, not native to South Fermanagh, who dismissed its inhabitants as a lazy lot, "they allowed their prejudices to connect the dominant local religion with a lack of industry." In fact, as he found, the district's rather phlegmatic "way of going on" is efficiently geared to local conditions.

Seamus Heaney in one of his essays quotes Carson McCullers's remark to the effect that in order "to know who you are, you have to have a place to come from"; by this reckoning, the people of Ballymenone ought to be able to count psychological soundness among their attributes — as indeed they do, but if you ignore the awkward distinctions between the two moral neighbour and the bad fanatic, but there is no spokesman for the second type in his book, which perhaps leaves the picture incomplete.

The author of *Passing the Time* certainly finds much to admire in the people he is studying; of these, Hugh Nolan, clever, subtle and diffident, and Ellen Cutler, amiable and outgoing, represent the Ballymenone outlook at its most pleasing. (It's neat, but unimportant, that one is Catholic and the other Protestant.) Glassie has missed, though, some traits that are

part of Glassie's commentary is the chapter entitled "A Chronicle" which scans the history of the North as it affected South Fermanagh; the author has consulted all the most pertinent sources and uses quotation to excellent effect. Certainly he cannot be accused of skimping his research, or of having failed to carry out his fieldwork intensively (not to say intensely). He cannot control his addiction to the large concept, however, and so we are off again: "History is land is meaning" — the past expands to uncountable, unknowable wholeness, etc. There's an appropriate rejoinder to all this: "Oh aye."

And Where Do You Stand On The National Question?

'Told him the shortest way to Tara was via Holyhead'.
Stephen Dedalus

Apple-blossom, a great spread of it
above our heads.

This blue morning a new visitor
is laidback on a deckchair;
he's civil and clever,
a flinty mandarin
being entertained, like an oxymoron,
in this walled garden.

Eco two glasses of young wine
... et on mange des asperges.

I imagine him
as the state's intelligence,
a lean man in a linen suit
who has come to question me
for picking up a pen
and taking myself a shade seriously.

'Paisley's plain tongue, his cult
of Bunyan and blood
in blind dumps like Doagh and Boardmills —
that's the enemy.'

I've an answer ready in the sun
but my eye times the grass
for a tiny mound of soil:
the mole works underground,
a blind glove
that gropes the earth and cannot love.

'Your Lagan Jacobins, they've gone
with *The Northern Star*. I've heard
Hewitt and Heaney trace us back
to the Antrim weavers —
I can't come from that.'

'Why not, though? Isn't there
this local stir in us all —
lick of the thumb, a word's relish,
the ditorial tick of an account,
wee lick of spit or lovejuice?

I'd call that a brave kindness.'
Then a journey blows back at me —
rust-orange and green,
the Enterprise scudding north
past the brown burn of whin and bracken
till it halts and waits for clearance
under the gowly vigilance
of a corrie in bandit country —

'That's where the god, Autochthon,
is crossed by the hangman's rope.'
He counters with a short fiction
called *Molyneux's Last Hope*.
'These islands are stopping-stones
to a metropolitan home,
an archipelago that's strong
between America and Europe.'

'So you're a band of Orange dandies?
Oscar in Pire-Lachaise with a sash on?'
'Well, not exactly . . . that's unfair —
like my saying it's a green mess you're after.'
'I want a form that's classic and secular,
the risen République,
a new song for a new constitution —
wouldn't you rather have that
than say loons, baggy and British?
You don't have to fall back
on Burke and the Cruiser,
on a betty style
and slack o'whozy emotion.'

We hit a pause like a ramp,
shrug and mark time
before we guess the design
of life after Prior:
the last civil servant
is dropping over from Whitehall.
Call him Sir Peregrine Falkland:
he's a bit thick — not a high flyer —
but he'll do the trick.

UNITED STATES

STEPHEN J. PYNE

Fire in America: A Cultural History of Wildland and Rural Fire 66pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £26. 0 681 08300 2

This bulky, provocative volume is really a trilogy of texts, scrambled order of sequence and arranged like a patchwork quilt. "Mine has been a homestead task," Stephen Pyne modestly begins. "I have tried to bring fire to history." One part of the trilogy examines fire, its uses and mythology, and our attitudes to its power. Another part offers a detailed regional scrutiny of wildfire (especially forest fire) in the United States. The third part is a history of fire-fighting in rural America, including sections on its equipment, manpower and administration. On the whole Pyne writes briskly and alertly, giving every impression of delight in his labours. He sometimes changes course with stunning speed: a single paragraph that starts by examining man and "other elements of the biota" goes on to focus the statistics of lightning and fire loss; turns back to Vulcan, Zeus and classical cures; wanders away to the South Pacific and the goddess Pele; and finishes by quoting Sir James Frazer on the Druidic worship of mistletoe. It is an impressive achievement merely to have assembled all this material; Pyne's footnotes alone run to eighty-three closely-spaced pages. But a number of his conclusions are questionable, to say the least.

Some of the book's most fascinating and controversial sections are those that concentrate on American Indians. Pyne demonstrates convincingly that Indians had discovered numerous functions for fire, among them ceramics, warfare, spectacle, husbandry, hunting, communication, and the repulsion of biting insects. He is at pains to attack any scholarly romanticism about the Indians' adaptation to a stable environment, arguing that their frequent burning of the land had widespread results: "it may be said that the general

consequence of the Indian occupation of the New World was to replace forested land with grassland or savannah. . . ." Indian fire certainly produced an enormous expansion of range for the American buffalo, and the distinguished anthropologist Loren Eiseley believed that it might have been an important factor in the geologically recent extinction of American elephants. In an even more striking generalization, Pyne claims that "The virgin forest was not encountered in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; it was invented in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For this condition Indian fire practices were largely responsible." It is true, and well worth emphasizing, that early explorers and colonists on the east coast of America were often surprised by the similarity of the new continent to the gently wooded landscapes they had left behind. But this by no means tells the whole story. For example, Nicolas de la For, a Spanish explorer in Texas in the mid-eighteenth century, felt oppressed by the "dismal" and "unending" forests of pine and oak, "so tall and thick that in some places it is difficult to see the sky." Pyne's determination to show that the arrival of white settlers was beneficial to American woodland occasionally leads him to absurd lengths: he even speaks of "the forest, an environment that Indians found largely uninhabitable". Tell that to the Haida or the Cree!

With another sweeping brush-stroke, he declares the idea of wilderness to be "a recent American invention". The European concept of wilderness had traditionally encompassed a sense of barrenness and desolation, sometimes given a religious twist (as in the opening sentence of *The Pilgrim's Progress*), and is a far cry from Thoreau's declaration, "I love the wild not less than the good." Yet Pyne has little sympathy with the environmentalists' approach to American resources. "As an idea and as a political fact", he claims, "wilderness is a human artifact . . . it is the human enterprise, as preserved by the scholar, that gives definition and meaning to wilderness". In short, man is the measure of all things. Pyne treats

with scorn the idea that there could be such a thing in North America as a "pure" fire regime, for even in Alaska the flora has been determined partly by man. In practice he often agrees with contemporary ecologists, especially about the value of wildfires in maintaining the health of an environment; but he begins from very different premises. "Only with romanticism", he insists, "did forest gloom become a desirable commodity". A commodity, like pork or coal, to be sold and cooked.

Behind Pyne's wealth of facts and figures stands a romanticism very much his own: a populist nationalism which demands approval, if not reverence, for the fire behaviour of American settlers. This means, among other things, a willingness to overlook his own evidence; the barrenness of hillsides in much of present-day Maine, for instance, resulted from the eighteenth-century practice of burning out wolf packs from their mountain haunts, a habit that destroyed the meagre soil as well as the animals. Pyne laments the initial dependence of American forestry on European models, for conditions in the two continents were very different, and the US needed to recognize that the fire-free woods of western Europe should not be taken as ideals in its own forest management. (Again playing fast and loose with facts, he asserts that by the end of the nineteenth century "the Great Reclamation had long since transformed the forests of France and Germany into farms and fields. . . .") When the science of forestry was in its infancy in America, it paid particular attention to the prevention of wildfires, a demand that often brought it into conflict with local people. Pyne makes his own position clear: "The real tyranny of technology transfer in this instance was that a self-proclaimed science demanded the repudiation of frontier folkways. Centuries of practical experience painfully and empirically acquired by American settlers in a range of fire regimes was [sic] abruptly sacrificed, only to be rediscovered later."

Again this is far too simple a vision. American professional forestry grew up around the turn of the century, the days of Theodore Roosevelt; in the years since then he has become a highly prolific author (his blurb says he has written "about sixty books"); it has occurred to him to do in the 1980s pretty much what Sullivan undertook in the 1920s, though at lesser length (there are only to be three volumes in all) and with fewer pictures. It has to be asked whether the undertaking is worthwhile, and how well the author has carried out his intentions.

In the matter of execution it is hard to fault him. He emerges as the nicest of men, with a style that blends a flowing manner with a beguiling innocence of outlook. For Mr Wagenknecht never forgets, or lets his readers forget, that these were the days of his childhood, and he frequently uses his memoirs of what life then looked or felt like to bring the past vividly before us. In a way *American Profile* is a disguised autobiography, and is pleasant to read because Mr Wagenknecht is so pleasant to know. He seems to have a happy nature, and he certainly finds it hard to say a harsh word about anybody. He is severe only on the coal-owners who resisted the strike of 1902, and hostile only to the Thaw family who, when Harry Kendall Thaw killed the famous architect Stanford White, made full use of their great wealth to "destroy" White's reputation in the process of getting the murderer sent to a madhouse rather than to execution. Wagenknecht does not exactly say that his witness Thaw had been hanged or electrocuted, but he feels strongly that White was doubly destroyed by the Thaw and that the case showed their was one law for the rich and another for the poor.

In general, his only mistake is to forget that not everything is as it used to be. In his judgement of the past, Mr Wagenknecht is a boy in

the very period when the Great Lakes states were suffering the worst fires in the nation's history (the word "firestorm" originated not in the Second World War, but in the American Midwest in 1871). These fires were the result not only of the arrival of the railway and of logging companies in search of quick profits, but also of farmers who were hungry for cheap land and were happy to use fire to clear it. Pyne admits that only when the virgin timber had been exhausted, and agricultural settlement abandoned, did the great fires subside. The "practical experience" of "frontier folkways" had helped to cause massive destruction. Equally, it may be thanks only to professional foresters that the coastal redwoods of California remain, because the widely accepted combination of brush-burning and logging was proving incompatible with the redwoods' survival. Of course the concept of fire protection existed long before the US Forest Service was born, and in the late nineteenth century individuals and communities did fight fires as well as setting them. But the battles were highly selective. Pyne quoted a Californian of the period who observed, "Wherever land is occupied and fenced, forest fires are feared and fought. . . . But the unoccupied public domain is devastated and blistered with impunity." Perhaps the repudiation of frontier folkways was not such a disastrous thing after all.

Fire in America records a reluctant, gradual, uneasy realization on the part of Americans that a *laissez-faire* approach to public land was causing it, and them, almost irreparable harm. For America remains what it has always been: a nation of fire. In the Great Depression, arson became an epidemic in several regions where fire-fighting provided one of the few ways of earning cash; as a result, in 1931 parts of Idaho were placed under martial law, and federal troops had to be despatched to the Black Hills of South Dakota. Even today the rate of death from fire in the US is 400 times greater than that of Britain and an amazing 200 times greater than that of Canada, a country with related patterns of demography and land-use. Fires remain what, at one level, they always were, for Indians, settlers and the inhabitants of cities alike: a rich source of live entertainment. Southern California, Pyne warns, has even nurtured a "cultural watershed" in which arson is integral; he compares its

psychology to that of mass murder. By the late 1970s the apocalyptic ending of Nathaniel West's *The Day of the Locust* was proving a factual prophecy, and fires had become "media events, a suburban invention". Yet perhaps this was not altogether surprising in a nation where (according to an advertising research report of 1968) Smokey the Bear was better known than the President. He had long been part of federal law; Congress passed a Smokey Bear Act in 1952. And he had successfully been exported: missionaries in the Congo found that local children "were intensely interested in the bear that wore a hat, and wondered if all the animals in America wore hats".

Smokey had in fact developed out of wartime propaganda. In some of his most suggestive pages, Pyne develops the intimate connection between the nation's fire protection and its system of defence, observing that "the morale of fire control has waxed and waned with enthusiasm for, and a sense of purpose by, the military", and that fire protection and war "seem to tip a similar moral energy". The relationship has its grim side. The technology of broadsword fire, used as an instrument of war by the Americans in Vietnam, developed directly out of experience of the brushfires in southern California; in Vietnam at least three attempts were made to create mass fires by which to burn off vast blocks of chemically poisoned vegetation. The "success" of these experiments is an official secret, but some estimates indicate that 100,000 acres were destroyed in this way. Of course this was not the first or last time that fire has been used as a weapon. I am still trying to decide whether it is comforting to learn that the US Army's experiments in the Second World War with the use of bats to carry chemical bombs were anticipated in the Book of Judges by Samson, who tied firebrands to the tails of three hundred foxes so as to ruin the Philistines' lands and crops.

Occasionally Pyne's earnestness, his sheer enthusiasm for fire, leads him badly astray. He does not admit that a full-scale nuclear war would simply burn America down. Instead, he informs us that "the thermal pulse of the atom bomb not only presented fire research with new problems, it also ignited its imagination and soon led to new methodologies." It seems a tarnished sort of silver lining to find in that particular cloud.

Dear dead decade

Hugh Brogan

HOWARD WAGENKNECHT

American Profile 1900-1909

36pp. University of Massachusetts Press. £22.50 (paperback, \$10). 0 80223 390 5

In the 1920s and 30s the distinguished American journalist, Mark Sullivan, brought out his immensely popular *Our Times*, a six-volume history of the United States from 1900 to 1925. The work had many superficial charms: anecdotes, hundreds and hundreds of pages; it was excellently printed on thick shiny paper; and Sullivan had a way too intelligent and patriotic to produce a mere compendium; he had indeed cheered Theodore Roosevelt and deeply respected Woodrow Wilson; his vision of his era was in that way somewhat commonplace, but he was able to give it the life of his own conviction and energy. He thus made a significant contribution to establishing the standard American view of the early twentieth century, the view which historians have been trying to modify completely. He still makes entertaining and instructive reading. All students of modern American history should have a look at him.

Edward Wagenknecht lists *Our Times* in his "Suggestions For Further Reading", and refers to it passingly in his book. It is a pity that he does not go deeper than he acknowledges. Mark Sullivan was a boy in

the days of Theodore Roosevelt; in the years since then he has become a highly prolific author (his blurb says he has written "about sixty books"); it has occurred to him to do in the 1980s pretty much what Sullivan undertook in the 1920s, though at lesser length (there are only to be three volumes in all) and with fewer pictures. It has to be asked whether the undertaking is worthwhile, and how well the author has carried out his intentions.

In the matter of execution it is hard to fault him. He emerges as the nicest of men, with a style that blends a flowing manner with a beguiling innocence of outlook. For Mr Wagenknecht never forgets, or lets his readers forget, that these were the days of his childhood, and he frequently uses his memoirs of what life then looked or felt like to bring the past vividly before us. In a way *American Profile* is a disguised autobiography, and is pleasant to read because Mr Wagenknecht is so pleasant to know. He seems to have a happy nature, and he certainly finds it hard to say a harsh word about anybody. He is severe only on the coal-owners who resisted the strike of 1902, and hostile only to the Thaw family who, when Harry Kendall Thaw killed the famous architect Stanford White, made full use of their great wealth to "destroy" White's reputation in the process of getting the murderer sent to a madhouse rather than to execution. Wagenknecht does not exactly say that his witness Thaw had been hanged or electrocuted, but he feels strongly that White was doubly destroyed by the Thaw and that the case showed their was one law for the rich and another for the poor.

In general, his only mistake is to forget that not everything is as it used to be. In his judgement of the past, Mr Wagenknecht is a boy in

plays, players and performances; nor is he much better when dealing with literature. It is of very little interest that the essayist Samuel McChord Crothers, "pastor of the First Unitarian Church, on the edge of Harvard Yard" of his time; nor do I want to know that Laura Jean Libby was the author of *Had She Loved Him*, *Love When His Love Grew Cold*, *Love Once But Strangers Now*, and *The Price Of A Kiss*.

The fact that Wagenknecht can pack in so happily so much dead information suggests that he is somewhat out of touch with the present; and this, unfortunately, must be the verdict on his "entire enterprise". There was absolutely no need to repeat Mark Sullivan's experience. Wagenknecht makes it plain that he disapproves of nearly everything that he has happened upon, dealing with the distant past he cannot help writing in a sunny, hopeful fashion: that makes Sullivan (who brought out his first two volumes before the 1929 Crash) seem saturnine. The book is not quite without fresh material: I was entranced by the pages showing the connection between the Seventh Day Adventists' and the invention of cornflakes. On the other hand, the portrait of Theodore Roosevelt, though full, sympathetic and intelligent, contained nothing which cannot easily be found elsewhere.

Altogether, if Mr Wagenknecht presumes to be the enterprise, I can only say that he will make it more of an embarrassment and less of a chronicle; and that he will represent somewhat what he is, and what he is not, in a way that is not to his credit.

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Liberties with a legend

D. D. R. Owen

The Song of Roland
Translated by C. H. Sisson
BBC Radio

The *Song of Roland* was the audio-visual event of its age. Through the incantatory art of the jongleur, countless medieval audiences participated in its dire action and brilliant scenes rich in colour, high in emotional charge, impressive in their stylized dignity. That the BBC was to present a full version was an exciting prospect. For seven sessions our home would become our castle, and we could hope to catch something of the experience that once fired imaginations and left its mark on centuries of literature, standards of honour and integrity, and even on recorded history.

Sixty years after the Conquest, William of Malmesbury claimed the *Song* had been struck up at Hastings to inspire the Norman troops. Wace later named the minstrel as Taillefer—a nice irony, since this character is first met

opening the battle in the early *Carmen de Hastingae Proelio* and can be shown to be patterned on Roland himself. In fact the *Carmen* was much indebted to the *Song*, both for certain incidents and for the portrayal of William and Harold, shown respectively in terms of Roland and Charlemagne or of Canelon and Marsilie; and some of this has crept into the mainstream of English history. In literature and legend, the *Roland's* influence was stamped not only on the medieval epic but even on courtly romance; and it is likely that King Arthur with his illustrious nephew and company of the Round Table achieved immortality at least in part as British rivals to Charlemagne, Roland and the peers.

Such was the astonishing power of a legend which, inspired by a humiliating military setback, grew eventually into a heroic drama of triumph in disaster. But whatever its exemplary function as a vehicle for feudal ideals, it could never have caught the Middle Ages by the throat had it not come into the hands of a poet of genius using a rich, resonant language with unparalleled skill. Basic to his art was his manipulation of sound: the beat of the verse, the acoustic exploitation of

repeated elements, formulae, phrases, and a tempo varying with the mood from the breathless evocation of battle as a ritualized "dance of death" to the slow anguish of a lament for the dead—and through it all the almost hypnotic rhythm of the assonating decasyllable.

To attempt an "authentic" presentation with a single reciter would have been a tremendous challenge to translator, producer and performer, but one the BBC could have met, given the right text. Sadly (some might think prudently) it has been declined, the script being read by a number of actors and supplemented by the occasional intervention of attractively atmospheric music (composed by Nigel Osborne), scored for several instruments, not the solitary jongleur's fiddle.

The result is disappointing, although it may be the best that could have been done, given the nature of C. H. Sisson's translation. His concern has not been to reproduce the strong pulse of the verse or its subtler aural effects. His lines of uneven length, usually paired together with rhyme, approximate rhyme or assonance, remind us that a poet has passed this way, but leave no impression of vibrant

chant or song. With the original's acoustic finery thus stripped away, it is doubly important that the dignity of its substance be maintained, a responsibility that Sisson, despite many happy touches, has not always met. His search for rhyme or the next best thing is partly to blame, producing such infelicities as a pagan's vaunt "As sure as eggs are eggs/The twelve peers won't stay on their legs" or Canelon's request of Charlemagne "Give me your blessing./Since I must go, no point in missing", while the improbable rendering of "Anseis li fiens" is "Anseis / Who is so full of his own fleas". One wonders at times if such oblique versions are due to caprice or to misunderstanding. There are certainly some mistranslations, ranging from the relatively minor (a plural for a singular, for instance, that obscures the sense) to the serious, as when Roland's "Oliver, brother, you must not fail" becomes "Oliver, you are my brother but I have failed you."

One further example shows how Sisson's free method can combine in a few lines mistranslation, gratuitous addition, an element of whimsically inappropriate interpretation, and a general lowering of tone. Canelon bluntly speaks Charlemagne's ultimatum to his arch-enemy. Should Marsilie reject the terms, he will be seized and brought to Aix. I translate literally: "You'll be flung on a wretched pack-animal. There you'll be condemned to lose your head. Our emperor sends you this letter." He delivers it into the pagan's right hand. Sisson's version runs:

"He says you would go on a donkey like a load of wood. There you would lose your head. You'd better have a look at the emperor's letter." And with that he hands it over. Like a billet-doux from a lover.

This, to be fair, does not pretend to be a scholarly translation for experts. For many listeners no doubt it provides a few hours of pleasurable entertainment; and it may tickle the palate of some for further exploration of medieval legend. Yet the BBC could have produced a passable, and more stirring, version. The evidence is in their splendid 1966 programme *A Bayeux Tapestry*, which was threaded through with extracts from the *Roland* (in Scott-Moncrieff's translation) and opened with some lines of the original delivered with truly epic panache.

supremely well for *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, a puzzle of superimposed riddles, falls when applied to a much more linear structure: Smiley's quest for his "black Grail".

The earlier series established beyond any doubt that Guinness was Smiley, Smiley Guinness, and this has been more than borne out over the past weeks. The confusion which this identification introduces into the distinction between art and life seems to have affected the playing of some of the other principals, who have gone for the larger than life-size portrayal. Perhaps only Michael Lindsay as Grigoriev, a Russian clown from the Soviet Embassy in Berne, brings this off successfully.

Whither now, however? The BBC can hardly—even if it could afford the cost—backtrack to *The Honourable Schoolboy* and swing through south-east Asia in the steps of Jerry Westerby. It looks, therefore, as if we might have seen the last of Smiley: which is definitely a sad thought.

Your whole range of faces

T. J. Binyon

Smiley's People
BBC TV

Just before nine o'clock the Monday before last Karla (Patrick Stewart) dropped, with heavy symbolism, the famous gold-plated cigarette lighter once given by Ann Smiley (Sian Phillips) to her husband George (Alec Guinness) on to the cobble of West Berlin, so bringing to an end an action which had begun with the sinister approach of Oleg Kirov (Dudley Sutton) to Madame Ostrakova (Eileen Atkins) on a Paris pavement six weeks before. *Smiley's People* is certainly a sumptuous spectacle. Production values are sky-high: Hamburg is, indubitably, Hamburg; Berne Berne. The title sequence is mysterious and enthralling; the music, composed and conducted by Patrick Gowers, insidious but unobtrusive. Yet, for all that, something is amiss.

In a medium which cannot even refrain from plumping out *Pride and Prejudice* with extraneous material it is rare to find a text treated with the reverential fidelity that is brought to bear on the original in this production. Initial anfractuosités of exposition are ironed out, but apart from this each dialogue, each setting, adheres to the author's words with fanatical scrupulousity. So much so, indeed, that the most minor deviation comes to be scrutinized with the kind of attention that a Kremlinologist brings to bear on a new order of faces in the annual photograph of the Central Committee.

It is not too difficult to see why the authors of the screenplay—John Hopkins and John le Carré himself—should have decided not to allow the pale young intelligence operative Nigel Mostyn (Stephen Riddle) to resign from the service, as he does in the book, but to have him sucked by Saul Enderby (Barry Foster), the brutally single-minded Whitehall warrior who heads the Circus. And it is also easy to see why that "prim, pretty graduate" Molly Meakin (Lucy Fleming) was imported into the story from *The Honourable Schoolboy* and made to play an entire scene with Enderby's right hand resting on the back of her neck. But it was easier to conjecture what song the sirens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid among women, than to interpret the subtle thinking behind the fact that Toby Esterhase (Bernard Hepton) drives round Berne, not in "a green Citroën deux-chevéaux, Geneva registration", as laid down in the book, but in a blue Renault 4.

The closeness to the original brings

out clearly some aspects in which the television production is superior to the book. Portentous descriptions—"In the religious light between dawn and morning his black waistcoat and white collar had the glint of the soutane"—and attempts at the demonic—"Not one face at all actually, the Superintendent reflected. . . . More your whole range of faces. More your patchwork of different ages, people and endeavours"—are replaced by simple, unselfregarding camera shots. And the author's love for constructing facile parallels in characters and situations—his chief weapon of irony since *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold*—becomes less obvious when the evidence is not set down on the page, but mumbled in through the window of a taxi, or uttered gently in a moment of self-communion.

On the other hand the novel's gradual but irresistible acceleration in pace from convoluted introduction to simple climax and coda is in no way achieved on the screen; there is no more urgency in the final episode than in the first. The method which worked

Development of a property developer

Harold Hobson

STEPHEN FAGAN
The Hard Shoulder
Hampstead Theatre

Toby Savage, beautifully groomed, is impeccable in appearance and has the advantage of being played by Peter Blythe, looking like the captain of all the hosts of the steel-trud and the blade-straight. But—he is, if not a leper, at any rate a property developer; and perhaps even Naaman, from the height of his diseased pride and his flesh-corrupted glory, would have despised him.

Despite my pleasure, early in *The Hard Shoulder*, at seeing Mr Blythe at great height (actually on a roof-top), and joined almost immediately by the engaging and wickedly witty Simon Jones as his architect, mentally defying even Nancy Meckler's beautifully nuanced direction, I feared the worst. The presence in a play of a property developer is an almost certain guarantee of boredom, clichés, and the weary repetition of moral denunciations that have been made a thousand times before to the effect that the middle classes are avaricious, heartless, social parasites who are probably wife-bashers, child-batterers, and racketeers as well.

The reason for the monotony of much modern drama is simply that the now twenty-six-year-old school of dramatists fancy themselves as sociologists, but are no great shakes as historians, which enables them to clamour for the restoration of the past without feeling guilty as reactionaries. Mr Fagan, however, is not exactly like that, and he has therefore been condemned for not really kicking out at the middle class. He does not bother to reiterate such received truths as that property developers are frequently unscrupulous, and often, for purely selfish reasons, cause great evil. Instead, while in no way concealing that behind the splendid façade of Toby Savage the rats are at work gnawing away at the breadth and boldness of his imagination, Fagan concentrates on the more exciting and unexpected fact that even a property developer may find himself as much at bay as Macbeth, and that then his behaviour becomes a matter of deep dramatic interest.

Before this point is reached Fagan writes some thoughtful and effective speeches on such subjects as the futility and temptation of worldly possessions; the thrill and sense of superhuman power in exceeding the speed limit on a motorway that does not run through your own house and garden; the luminous glamour of watching the flames leap out from a building you have just set on fire; and the peculiar and too little realized sensitivity of nature of almshouse builders. One of

these speeches is delivered with gentle humour by Simon Jones; another by Peter Blythe with mounting blood pressure; and the other two with a clouded, groping mystery by Philip Bird as a squatter whose metamorphosis of character is worth close attention.

Perhaps Fagan brings in too many jokes before he gets to his main theme, which is the problem of what degree of moral guilt you incur if you plan to commit a crime, believe that you have actually committed it, and then find that you are at least if not innocent because in fact it has been committed by someone you never even suspected, and entirely independently of anything you yourself have done. The danger of the too long continuance of the jokes is that—as on the night I was present—they will encourage an unsophisticated audience into hysterical laughter that fails to subside when the crisis comes. No effect is more distressing in a theatre than the delighted shrieks with which an audience that is thoroughly enjoying itself sometimes greets points that are entirely serious. The question of Toby Savage's guilt is of course very serious indeed; and at the very end of the play, by Susan Jameson, and directed by Miss Meckler, the play's special subtlety, passages of subtle judgment which is worthy of Aristotle and intelligent meditation. The play, as every motorist knows, is a place of refuge and of incomprehensible

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Behind the lines

Robert Hewison

Any academics who have been rung up in recent weeks and asked by channel 4 researchers for a capsule addition of structuralism or their view on the crisis in post-modernism will be aware that Channel 4 is taking to the air. By the time this column appears we will know the worst; commercial television's second channel was launched on Tuesday. The new station has been promoted with promises to minority audiences: while these promises are still fresh it is worth asking what Channel 4 will do for the arts, and in particular for literature.

To begin with, Channel 4 has no "Arts Department" at all. Instead the administration has borrowed a term from the world of publishing, and come up with a system of "commissioning editors", each with a number of hours to fill, and a pot of money to spend. The Commissioning Editor of Arts is Michael Kustow, formerly of the National Theatre, formerly of the BBC. He has four to five hours to account for each week, and £2 million this year to spend (and, we gather, spend already).

Kustow is determined to escape the "photostatization" of the arts on television. He wants, he says, to avoid the *Omibus* approach: "it is not that it won't hurt", in terms of the form of presentation imposed by the medium, his most ingenious idea is a series of short poetry "slots" (the medium also imposes its own vocabulary). Each consists of the text of a poem on the screen, while an unseen reader gives the poem voice. The idea is to concentrate on the act of reading - eye and sound - rather than to distract with visual images or verbal digressions. The poems will be scattered through the schedule unannounced, like commercials, or, in the terms of an older vocabulary, like verse in literary magazines.

Kustow has to hand a long list of "performance" programmes and conventional arts documentaries that will be judged by the interest they generate in their subject matter, and success with which they manipulate the conventions of television. "The idea of a factual documentary about a writer is almost an impossibility", so John Calvin's responsibility for the death of the novel will be investigated in terms of a detective story. The cause of "literature" as such will be cared for by

the failure of energy and imagination in English Literature - is one of the topics coming soon. For between seventy-five and ninety minutes Alvarez will debate with the advocate of a point of view, and two or more dissenters. Curiously, while Hermione Lee welcomes the idea of a seminar on *Book Four*, Alvarez specifically rejects it. "We want to avoid a pseudish, after-dinner chat show, we want to hit a high level, but in a discussion that doesn't become a seminar."

Voices proposes to avoid all taint of trivialization, but runs the risk of disappearing into the ghetto whence Channel 4 arts programmes are attempting to escape. And television imposes its demands even here: there will be little room for illustrations, so the success of the programme will depend on the personal advocacy of the participants. Instead of trivialization, personalization.

What will be the effect of the medium on those bearing its message? Michael Kustow likes to quote Walter Benjamin, "the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition", (which explains the difficulty of presenting literature on television). Al Alvarez has no ambitions: "I am in no way of being a television personality - I am a literary intellectual." Hermione Lee continues to teach at the University of York: "The interest for me is the relationship between academic procedures - teaching, researching and reviewing (which is a lonely occupation) - and working for the first time in this medium, where you directly challenge the material, and are challenged by it. There is every point in learning a new skill." Michael Kustow: "I am wearily resigned to anything new in this country being greeted with cynicism."

If you want to get television viewers to read more books - which I take to be one of the reasons for discussing literature on television - then the straightforward answer is to advertise them. Next month the first ever joint campaign to sell books on television begins - on Channel 4.

Books have appeared in television commercials before, but Desmond Clarke of the Book Marketing Council has scored a remarkable success by persuading eight of our mutually competitive hardback book publishers to combine in a co-ordinated campaign. Over a period of four weeks eight individual titles will be promoted in two thirty-second commercials. The total cost of the campaign is £70,000, but the pioneers have got in cheaply with £4,000 each, the rest of the money coming from the Post Office, who wish to promote their new "Post-A-Book" Service, which considerably eases the business of buying a book to send to someone else.

The eight titles were chosen by their respective publishers with the Christmas book boom in mind (yes, Len Deighton is there again), and fiction is outnumbered three to one. But what is good for book sales should be good for bookshops, and hence, it is to be hoped, good for readers and writers.

Some way from the parochial concerns of the London Weekend Television area - the only area where the book commercials will be seen - the European Economic Community has decided to do something about the state of poetry.

Apart from a project to improve "the economic and social situation of cultural workers" in conjunction with the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales, the European Economic Commission has decided to launch a long-term programme to promote poetry throughout the Community, by making better known one or two contemporary poets already well known within their national boundaries. The programme coincides with another scheme to promote literary translations. Twenty representative works from one or more Community languages will be translated into one or more other such languages, with financial assistance from the Community. Knowing the propensity of Community schemes to lead to over-production, are we about to create a poetry mountain? No doubt Greece could arrange something on Parnassus.

Fifty years on: Chaliapin's memoirs

The TLS of November 3, 1932 carried the following review of *Man and Mask by Fyodor Chaliapin, translated by Philip Megroz*:

"Meet John any party" was the advice of Maxim Gorky to Chaliapin. "Be an actor - in other words, be yourself. Nothing more will ever be asked of you." It was good advice, and the artist went to follow it. But it overlooked a crucial fact. Chaliapin might not be a party, but he could not help being a party. He was at once emperor and worker, tyrant and wage slave, soldier and vagrant. His symphony radiated to every class. Every party claimed him, alternately flattered him and reviled him. He was a party to be reckoned with, to be feared, to be suppressed if necessary.

But through all the revolutionary era Chaliapin never was suppressed, though at one time he was "wanted." The story, said a preliminary assessment, is told with "complete lucidity." Naturally, for the Chaliapin party has nothing to fear. It is more powerful than any national or international organization. It is Chaliapin. To get the measure of the party one need only look on the cap of Mr. Lloyd George congratulating the reverent upturned faces of the British ex-Premier and his party and the precious pose of the emperor-narrator and the relations of politics to art as established once and for all.

The idea of a critical moment of his career, the one moment when he had to choose his party. Beside it all the later adulations of the great, the angling for his adherence, the fawning of the crowds and the police warrants out against him, were of no importance whatsoever. Which should he choose? If he had chosen "the right stuff for singers," there would have been no doubt, one more highly successful singer in a world already full of them; but there would have been no Chaliapin. We may even doubt whether for Western Europe there would have been a Chaliapin. *My Lord George* congratulated the reverent upturned faces of the British ex-Premier and his party and the precious pose of the emperor-narrator and the relations of politics to art as established once and for all.

The title of Dmitri Andreievitch Chaliapin stands out. It was he who gave Chaliapin his first insight into musical characterization, and he did it through examples from *Mossorgsky's Boris Godunov*. "Now," he would say, "you see how music can react on the imagination. You see how a silence and a pause are able to give the subtle effect of characterization." This was the lesson which awoke in Chaliapin the qualities which have made his art unique. "Don't take any notice," the other singers of *Queen's* class said. "All he says may be true, but 'La Donna e mobile' is the right stuff for singers. Mossorgsky with his Varianians and Mitrokhins is literally poison for the voice and singing." Chaliapin declares that he was torn in two. "Sometimes I was so racked with doubt that I lay sleepless. Which should I choose: 'La Donna e mobile' or 'In the big town of Kazan'?"

This was the one critical moment of his career, the one moment when he had to choose his party. Beside it all the later adulations of the great, the angling for his adherence, the fawning of the crowds and the police warrants out against him, were of no importance whatsoever. Which should he choose? If he had chosen "the right stuff for singers," there would have been no doubt, one more highly successful singer in a world already full of them; but there would have been no Chaliapin. We may even doubt whether for Western Europe there would have been a Chaliapin.

Author, Author

Competition No 95
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than November 26. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 95" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Prior House, St John's Lane, London EC4M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on December 3.

1 "In Venice," she said, "the indecent movements of the gondolier quite affected my health, and, in consequence, I fell a prey to a sharp nervous fever. My temperature rose and it rose, ah, yes... until I became quite ill. At last I said to my maid (she was an English girl from Wales, and almost equally as sensitive as me): 'Pack... Away! And we left in haste for Florence.'

Competition No 91
Winners: Bernard Hume
Answers:
1 In Rome, the man they made Penetrates the night, riding veem

Author, Author

Once more deciding among bolts of dark.
The tailor kneels to take his measure.
Soon a finished suit will be laid out By his valet, for him to change into. Change of clothes? The very clothes of change!
Unchecked blazers women fluster round, Green coverts, midnight blues... My left hand a pincushion, I dispose, Till morning, of whole closets full of clues.

James Merrill, "Dreams About Clothes".
2 I wanted to watch Bhakku working on the car that evening, so I said to him, "Uncle Bhakku, your clothes looking really dirty and greasy. I wonder how you could bear to wear them."

V. S. Naipaul, *Miguel Street*, chapter 13.
3 She was fashionably dressed in blackish-green and silver, her hat was brilliant green, like the sheen on an insect, but the trim was soft dark green, a falling edge with fine silver; her coat was dark green, fur-trimmed with a high collar of gray fur, and great fur cuffs, the edge of her dress showed silver and black velvet, her stockings and shoes were silver grey.

Dr H. Lawrence, *Moment in Love*, chapter 26.

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**Oxford
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to the editor

Burckhardt

Sir, — Lord Dacre was quite right to castigate (October 8) the errors in the notes to the edition of Jacob Burckhardt's lectures on the "Study of History" because accuracy is a duty and not a virtue, as Karl Lachmann once said. Mistakes, however caused, are always the editor's responsibility.

Jacob Oeri's role as an editor, however, was more complex than the Master of Peterhouse recognizes: against Burckhardt's clear indication Oeri transposed the chapter on "Fortune and Misfortune in History" from its place in the methodological introduction to the end of the book, and thus obscured both its function as a critique of the historian's value judgments and the rigorous structure of the lecture course (p. 46f). It would have been tedious and pedantic to list all other major and minor alterations he made, a view with which Werner Kaegi was in entire agreement. Some changes may appear trivial, such as the removal of the inverted commas in the sentence "Alexander conquers Persia and Bismarck unites Germany" in the chapter on "Great Men" (p. 401), but in so doing Oeri wrongly gave the impression that his uncle was equating the German Chancellor's achievement with that of Alexander the Great.

Cumulative Burckhardt's arguments and soften the toughness of his aphoristic style. On the eve of publication Oeri, a classics master at the Obergymnasium in Basel, delivered this version of the lectures in his uncle's place in the university. The philologist's task is to establish — as accurately as possible — an authentic text, and in this case it seemed proper to offer it *ad placandum matri*. The historian, of course, has every right to prefer the text he has long been familiar with.

P. F. GANZ,
St Edmund Hall, Oxford.

Sir, — Having checked my references, I find that I was wrong to call Heinrich Leo a pupil of Ranke (October 8). As Daniel Johnson says (Letters, October 22), he was a pupil of Hegel; which however (since Burckhardt was equally opposed to Hegel and Ranke) does not affect my argument. But I do not concede that I was even "inadvertently" wrong in the "implication" of my remarks about Leo's "famous remark" "ein frischer fröhlicher Krieg." I believe that it is Mr Johnson who is inadvertent. As Professor Ganz writes (p. 67), on precisely this point, "nicht jeder seiner Zuhörer hat den wohl ironisch verklärten Ton des Dozenten an dieser Stelle richtig verstanden." To anyone familiar with Burckhardt's work, the irony, which has escaped Mr Johnson, must be obvious.

HUGH TREVOR-ROPER.
The Master's Lodge, Peterhouse, Cambridge.
Sir, — Hugh Trevor-Roper did well (October 8) to stress the primacy of lecturing at Basel and Jacob Burckhardt's part in it. The tradition was still flourishing in the early 1950s. The then Professor of Art History, Joseph Gantner, gave his main semi-public lecture at the increasingly inconvenient time of four o'clock on a Friday

afternoon. He was, I was told, pressed to find some alternative, but declined on the grounds that Jacob Burckhardt had always lectured at that hour. Instruction was also given. For the first lecture I delivered there the Professor of English, Henry Lüdtke, sat at the back of the room. At the end he advanced on me, saying, "I have something very important to tell you." As I mentally booked my ticket home, he continued, "You should write bigger on the blackboard."

GLYN TEGAI HUGHES,
Gregynog, University of Wales, Newtown, Powys.

America and the Vietnam War

Sir, — Hugh Brogan's letter (October 22) about my comments on the Indochina war was most interperate but the issues he raised do deserve a reply. On his first point was Hanoi's imperialism worth resisting? Obviously, in retrospect, the answer must be a flat no — the United States has yet to recover from the enormous loss of power, prestige and self-confidence caused by the war and the eventual defeat. That result, however, was not preordained. It was brought about precisely by the two agencies which I castigated in the review of Kissinger's book: the unstrategic use of military power under McNamara's direction, and then the unreasoning opposition to the war. But the dismal outcome does not mean that Hanoi should not have been resisted, any more than the eventual defeat of France in 1940 meant that Hitler's peace offer of October 1939 should have been accepted. Unless one can argue that the United States should have anticipated the eventual willingness and ability of the Chinese to resist the expansion of the North Vietnamese, the justification for the war stands fully valid — and the defeat merely proves that the war should have been better fought with far less firepower, much greater tactical skill and, above all, a coherent strategy. Incidentally, how can Mr Brogan justify his comment that "[US] casualties were extremely high"? The canonical number for all the Americans killed in Indochina happens to coincide with the standard figure usually cited for the annual toll of traffic death: fifty thousand. Whatever else it might have been, Vietnam was not the Somme.

Mr Brogan's second claim was that the war was exceptionally cruel and destructive ("Nixon's orgy of destruction"); certainly the misuse of firepower, in huge quantities, by the Americans, far exceeded that in all our living-rooms. It remained for the victors to educate us in the real meaning of cruelty and destructiveness. Once the TV cameras had left with the Americans, the knife, the axe and the AK-47s greatly exceeded the accomplishments of B 52s, Phantoms and all the rest; it has become the convention to attribute the post-war evils to the Khmer Rouge alone, but one notes that refugees keep coming out of Vietnam, and who knows what horrors are at work to make them risk the desperate voyage? Characteristically, Hanoi's spokesmen have bitterly criticized the United States for "enticing" the refugees out of Vietnam, even while it seems that the traffic is part of

an extortion/expulsion scheme conducted by the authorities in Saigon.

On Cambodia, Mr Brogan writes of the "genocidal strategy of the American high command." That, of course, is the classic inversion that was the centrepiece of the Shawcross book: the genocide perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge after their victory is imputed to the Americans who tried to prevent that victory. The only "strategy" pursued by the United States in Cambodia was an attempt to deny the use of Cambodian territory by the North Vietnamese; this was not genocidal either in its intent or its consequences (the area affected by the bombing campaign was a jungle scarcely inhabited by civilians but crossed by North Vietnamese convoys and occupied by Vietnamese forces). Since the nexus between the anti-war opposition, the termination of US aid to the Lon Nol regime, the victory of the Khmer Rouge and the subsequent genocide is so very direct, it is not surprising that it is always Cambodia that provokes the most extreme distortions of the evidence.

EDWARD N. LUTWAK,
4510 Drummond Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815.

'Young Edward Gibbon'

Sir, — The habit of naming Gibbon's ailment a hydrocele persists, I think, because the distinction between a true hydrocele and any watery swelling has been lost on laymen like myself. Patricia Craddock, for example, refers to a "hydrocele" while at the same time citing de Beer's earlier article, 1949, "The Malady of Edward Gibbon". Laymen may also have difficulty, as I do, in interpreting Gibbon's medical history in the late 1780s, when the swelling in his groin became considerably enlarged. Finally, one may as well admit to giving up legends generations of medical students about the great hydrocele — "one of those monstrous things which exist mainly in romance" — while indicating his sober belief that Gibbon suffered from both a hernia and a hydrocele. Whether hernia or hydrocele, however, the thing hung down to Gibbon's knee and fairly well earned its legendary standing: it was above all what he hid from himself.

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testicles" — pointed out by Milo Keynes (Letters, September 10) — was all my own.

W. B. CARNOCHAN,
Department of English, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305.

Palindromes

Sir, — Intrigued by Andrew Belsey's strict definition of a "perfect" palindrome (Letters, October 1) as one that reads identically forwards and backwards without altering either the punctuation or the spacing, I sat down this evening to try my hand at the form under the new rules. Though none of my attempts possesses any other merit, I was able to exceed his reigning champion in the category of longest perfect palindrome (thirty-one characters, not counting spaces).

The first of these may be considered an outcry by Count Dracula's son: "DAD DID EVIL DEED ON SEXES NO DEED LIVE DID DAD" (thirty-seven letters). The second reflects the anger of a group of sailors whose TV reception was obscured by a canine mascot which damaged the ship's electronic gear just as the Deity was making a personal appearance on a late-night show: "EVIL DOG WAS RAT ON RADAR NO TAR SAW GOK LIVE" (thirty-five letters). The third represents the confessions of a young officer about his corruption while he served with a military high command in wartime: "NOW SAW I WAR, ON TOP — SEXES — POT NO, RAW I WAS WON" (thirty-nine characters, including all the reversible interior punctuation).

As Andrew Belsey affirms, there can doubtless be longer "perfect palindromes" than these. I look forward to seeing an evening's work of others.

DONALD H. REIMAN,
The Carl H. Pforzheimer Library, Room 815, 41 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017.

Christianity and Democracy

Sir, — Edward Norman (October 8) might have mentioned that Christ was crucified by democratic vote. The crowd chose Barabbas.

IDRIS PARRY,
24 Albert Square, Altrincham, Cheshire.

Among this week's contributors

G. W. S. BARROW is Sir William Fraser Professor of Scottish History at the University of Edinburgh. His books include *Kingdom of the Scots*, 1973.

T. J. BINYON is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford. His crime novel *Swan Song* was published last month.

HUGH BROGAN is the author of *Abraham Lincoln*, 1974.

JEREMY CATTO is a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford.

DAVID CRANE is a lecturer in English at the University of Durham.

MARY DOUGLAS's books include *Natural Symbols*, 1970, and *Implicit Meanings*, 1976.

PHILIPPA FOOT is the author of *Virgins and Vices*, 1980.

JOHN GRIGO's books include *Nancy Astor: Portrait of the Pioneer*, 1980.

A. E. HARVEY is a Canon of Westminster.

ALISTAIR HAYTER's books include *Optima and the Romantic Imagination*, 1968.

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE's most recent book, *Introducing John Paul II: the Populist Pope*, was published earlier this year.

ROBERT HUGHES's *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War 1945-60* was published last year.

W. J. HOLLENWEGGER is Professor of Mission at the University of Birmingham.

J. C. HOULDEN is a lecturer in New Testament Studies at King's College, London.

GERARD IRVINE is the Vicar of St Matthew's Westminster, and a Prebendary of St Paul's Cathedral.

PETER JIMACK is Professor of French at the University of Stirling.

JONATHAN KEATES teaches English at the City of London School.

Piero's 'Baptism'

Sir, — In his review (October 1) of Marilyn Lavín's *Piero della Francesca's Baptism of Christ*, John White criticizes my contribution (an appendix on the proportions of geometry) for a number of reasons. His main point was that "the panel has clearly been cut on both sides", thereby invalidating the proportions of the schema I applied to the painting. I should like to oppose his apparent statement of fact with the following opinion.

Martin Davies's catalogue of the *Earlier Italian Schools in the National Gallery* (2nd ed revised, 1961, cat no 665) describes the panel on which the *Baptism* is painted as "Wood, rounded top, painted surface, 66 x 45 1/2 (1.67 x 1.16). The arch at the top starts a little way in on each side; but the paint has been made up, about 2 1/2 in. on each side of the spring, to form a wider arch."

The painting has been restored since the catalogue was compiled and the rather crude filling-in cleaned off, revealing now the semicircular top of the original composition. The modern frame covers the small blank gap between the two arches. The unretouched painting can be seen in Longhi's monograph (Sansoni reprint, 1980, pl 1) clearly showing the filled-in areas.

Professor White tells me that he thinks that the wider arch was originally conceived by Piero as a perfect semicircle, and that it has since been truncated on both sides by a cutting away of the panel's width, thus destroying the integral proportions of the painting.

I take the "rounded top", on the contrary, to represent an arbitrary trimming of the unpainted corner areas, perhaps for the purpose of framing, keeping well clear of the actual painting. If this is so, it is irrelevant to discuss the irregularity of its shape in support of the view that the painting has been cut. Furthermore, the National Gallery conservation files report no evidence of cutting.

The book is made up of three essays, each on one work of acknowledged importance in the Goethe canon, and each with a strong central argument.

The first, on *Winter Journey in the Harz Mountains* (Harszreise, 1m 1807), shows, with impressive detail, how Goethe embodied in his hold generalized in that difficult and mysterious poem his own existential problem during the period of its composition: the identity-crisis he suffered when faced with assuming more and more administrative duties in the state of Sachsen-Weimar at a time when the dangers he had so recently depicted in *Werther* had not been wholly banished from his own life and personality. Schöne's argument hinges on the demonstration that the poem is an experiment in *argury*, an attempt to transcend an oracle in the fashion handed down in classical tradition. This begins with the image of the hovering bird of prey at the beginning and culminates in the lines about the inward parts, the "Geweide", of the mountain at the end. Goethe obscures this "argury" theme, along with much else, in later, distancing revisions which entailed substitution of the word "mit unerforschten Busen" (with unexplored bosom) for the phrase that included the word "Geweide".

Since some manuscripts, seen by Goethe's contemporaries or by nineteenth-century scholars, appear to have been lost, Schöne finds himself driven to ingenious exercises in textual reconstruction, which make notable use of a text Goethe seems to have dictated to a secretary named Philipp Seidel. Such manuscripts in hands other than the poet's own play a significant part in the later essays too; and it is pleasant to record that in a book concerned with Goethe's spiritual crises and development as well as with the world of devils, witches, and spirits of all kinds, two indispensable documents turn out to have been written by a secretary called Geist. In the Seidel manuscript there are some dictation errors to be corrected, often with reference to later readings, before an Ur-version can be reconstructed. Here one would sometimes like more details than Schöne finds space for. In line 2, for instance, Seidel's text has "was ich als eine proposition" followed by an uninflected compound adjective "unverfälscht", which Schöne changes the apparent adjective into a

DERVLA MURPHY's books include *Where the Indus is Young*, 1977.

D. D. R. OWEN's books include *The Legend of Roland: A Pageant of the Middle Ages*, 1973.

TOM PAULIN's most recent collection of poems, *The Book of Juniper*, was published this year.

PAT ROGERS is the author of *The Augustan Vision*, 1974, and *Henry Fielding: A Biography*, 1979.

LORNA SAGE is a Lecturer in English at American Studies at the University of East Anglia.

J. J. SCARSBICK's books include *Henry VIII*, 1968.

PETER SEDGWICK's *Psycho, Politics* was published earlier this year.

ROGER SHATTUCK's *The Forbidden Experiment: the Story of the Wild Boy of Aveyron* was published in 1980.

BRIAN STOCK's books include *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Bernard Silvestris*, 1975.

WILLIAM TREVOR's novels include *Other People's Worlds*, 1980.

BRYAN WILSON is a Fellow of St John's College, Oxford.

MICHAEL WOODS is a Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford.

ALBRECHT SCHÖNE

Göhrzelchen, Liebeszauber, Samskult: Neue Einblicke in alte Goethezeit

200p. Munich: Beck. DM 34. 3406 08 5571

GERMAN LITERATURE

British readers will come to these stimulating essays well prepared. Professor E. M. W. Wilkinson's celebrated lecture on "Goethe's Sexual Attitudes", and the inclusion of the once tabooed poem *Das Tagebuch* in David Luke's Penguin selection and translation of Goethe's verse, have sharpened eyes on this side of the Channel for aspects of the poet's works which the Victorians, who made him one of their sages, studiously ignored. The books of E. M. Butler have left their readers in no doubt that important features of Goethe's mature writings can only be understood by those who know something of postmodernism, of witch-cults, and of Satanism. Osman Durrani's recent *Faust and the Bible* has redirected attention to the central part that biblical quotation, allusion, parody and "contrafacture" play in his dramatic masterpieces. That some of Goethe's works can be read *sub sensu commercialis*, and that knowledge of minute details of the social and physical life in eighteenth-century Weimar can materially further their ecstasies, will come as no surprise to those who have studied the pioneering writings of W. H. Bruford. As it happens, Albrecht Schöne finds no occasion for mentioning any of these scholars, though he writes in their spirit; but he does enlist British cooperation in his enterprise by making excellent use of the recorded opinions and demonstrations of the late F. P. Pickering.

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Eyebrows are bound to be raised, however, by Schöne's subsequent attempt to "reconstruct" the *Walpurgis Night* scene as it might have been by bringing together Goethe's unpublished drafts with readings of passages he did publish — including the whole "Open Field" scene, which now becomes part of "Walpurgis Night" — and linking the resulting text with stage-directions in a decidedly un-Goethean idiom: "The multitude lines up for a round-dance which passes over into a sexual orgy" or again: "Her lascivious dance with Faust approaches the sexual act." Well — yes, it might be interesting to see how all this would work out in an actual stage-production; but on the whole this kind of reconstruction is a questionable enterprise one would not like to see widely imitated. It appears that Schöne offered it to a German television station for performance in the present Goethe anniversary year, and that it was turned down. This decision may well be reconsidered in the near future, but I, for one, cannot think it misguided. The amalgam of Schöne and Goethe makes interesting reading, though, and it again and again prompts comparison with another treatment of the *Faust* legend: Heine's ballet-scenario *Der Doktor Faustus*, with its long introduction on German devilology, which clearly draws on many of the works that Goethe also used when he composed the fragments his later interpreter has now tried to weld into a scene Goethe might have envisaged but never put together in this form.

I find it somewhat surprising that a critic as sensitive to sexual/scatological overtones as Schöne should himself to be can end the first of his essays with a sentence that would have been immediately celebrated, in my student-days, as a classic of unintentional humour. Using an image from *Winter Journey in the Harz Mountains*, the author speaks of the twenty-five years in Weimar that now lay before Goethe as "Before one", he adds, in what constitutes the last sentence of the essay, "who wanted to water the world and did water it."

Nor is the interpreter content to demonstrate, in ways I find wholly persuasive, how much that was puzzling in the poem falls into place once this riddle is solved: he also tries to show, very instructively, how it could come about that the solution remained hidden for almost 200 years. He does this by means of a piece of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* which differs from orthodox histories of "critical reception" by tracing, not the gradual unfolding of inherent meanings in the course of time, but the propagation of explicable errors. This process begins with Schiller, who was all too eager to make the poem conform to the classification "naïve idyll" he had recently evolved in his essay *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, and it ends (in Schöne's view) with critics whose socially conditioned view of the German classics precluded the search for sexual meanings where these did not openly and directly appear on the surface. This "negative history" of critical reception will almost certainly start a lively controversy; but whatever the outcome, there can be no doubt that it will henceforth be impossible to discuss *Alexis and Dora* without full attention to Schöne's shrewdly and learnedly argued case.

The third essay is the most elaborate of all. It adduces a wealth of examples to show how Goethe's jottings for the "Walpurgis Night" episode of *Faust* demonstrate close and first-hand acquaintance with the literature of witch-cult and Satanism; and that they point inescapably to his intent to so dramatize a sexual collaboration with a host of sexual and scatological details drawn from his reading. Mature reflection, however, convinced him that his public would be so scandalized by all this, and he

noun — "auf Morgenschloßen Wolken" — but fails to tell us how he thinks these two nouns are grammatically related one to the other. How would, how should, a translator cope with this? And what about Seidel's spelling "Dichichts", which Schöne rightly amends to "Dickichts"? Might this tell us something about Goethe's pronunciation? Curiously enough Herder, in a copy he made of the same poem some three years afterwards, writes "Dichtichts". None of this affects Schöne's central argument, however; its steady and elegant course helps us relate puzzling parts of the final version of the poem to the whole in ways that would have been difficult without appreciation of the "oracle" or "argury" theme which appears much more clearly in the poem's earlier guise.

Schöne does not belong to the company of those who believe that first versions, or Ur-versions, are always best; but the arguments of all three essays in this volume will serve to strengthen the belief many of us hold that in important instances, including some parts of *Werther* and the "Sesenheim" poems, the later Goethe's alterations of what his earlier self had written were anything but improvements.

Few would disagree with Schöne's contention that this applies very obviously to *Alexis and Dora*, the subject of the second — and to my mind the best — essay in this volume. His list of variant readings shows that again and again Goethe spoils his own best inspirations by following out pedantic suggestions from A. W. Schlegel, and that in this case the original version is without doubt superior to the later revision. What this chapter succeeds in doing is nothing less than solving, in long last, a riddle which Goethe set the readers of this elegiac idyll or idyllic elegy — a riddle announced in words that David Luke translates: "It is thus that poets often recite to their audiences an artful riddle of words interwoven; every hearer enjoys the strange combination of attractive images, but the word is still missing in (reviewer's italics). Schöne brilliantly demonstrates that the word which may be "missing" in the hearer's consciousness before he has solved the riddle is in fact present in the poem itself. It is the word "Myrthe" and the sexual connotations which it serves to unlock in its narrower and wider context.

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Eyebrows are bound to be raised, however, by Schöne's subsequent attempt to "reconstruct" the *Walpurgis Night* scene as it might have been by bringing together Goethe's unpublished drafts with readings of passages he did publish — including the whole "Open Field" scene, which now becomes part of "Walpurgis Night" — and linking the resulting text with stage-directions in a decidedly un-Goethean idiom: "The multitude lines up for a round-dance which passes over into a sexual orgy" or again: "Her lascivious dance with Faust approaches the sexual act." Well — yes, it might be interesting to see how all this would work out in an actual stage-production; but on the whole this kind of reconstruction is a questionable enterprise one would not like to see widely imitated. It appears that Schöne offered it to a German television station for performance in the present Goethe anniversary year, and that it was turned down. This decision may well be reconsidered in the near future, but I, for one, cannot think it misguided. The amalgam of Schöne and Goethe makes interesting reading, though, and it again and again prompts comparison with another treatment of the *Faust* legend: Heine's ballet-scenario *Der Doktor Faustus*, with its long introduction on German devilology, which clearly draws on many of the works that Goethe also used when he composed the fragments his later interpreter has now tried to weld into a scene Goethe might have envisaged but never put together in this form.

I find it somewhat surprising that a critic as sensitive to sexual/scatological overtones as Schöne should himself to be can end the first of his essays with a sentence that would have been immediately celebrated, in my student-days, as a classic of unintentional humour. Using an image from *Winter Journey in the Harz Mountains*, the author speaks of the twenty-five years in Weimar that now lay before Goethe as "Before one", he adds, in what constitutes the last sentence of the essay, "who wanted to water the world and did water it."

Nor is the interpreter content to demonstrate, in ways I find wholly persuasive, how much that was puzzling in the poem falls into place once this riddle is solved: he also tries to show, very instructively, how it could come about that the solution remained hidden for almost 200 years. He does this by means of a piece of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* which differs from orthodox histories of "critical reception" by tracing, not the gradual unfolding of inherent meanings in the course of time, but the propagation of explicable errors. This process begins with Schiller, who was all too eager to make the poem conform to the classification "naïve idyll" he had recently evolved in his essay *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, and it ends (in Schöne's view) with critics whose socially conditioned view of the German classics precluded the search for sexual meanings where these did not openly and directly appear on the surface. This "negative history" of critical reception will almost certainly start a lively controversy; but whatever the outcome, there can be no doubt that it will henceforth be impossible to discuss *Alexis and Dora* without full attention to Schöne's shrewdly and learnedly argued case.

The third essay is the most elaborate of all. It adduces a wealth of examples to show how Goethe's jottings for the "Walpurgis Night" episode of *Faust* demonstrate close and first-hand acquaintance with the literature of witch-cult and Satanism; and that they point inescapably to his intent to so dramatize a sexual collaboration with a host of sexual and scatological details drawn from his reading. Mature reflection, however, convinced him that his public would be so scandalized by all this, and he

therefore abandoned his scheme. Schöne believes that what he substituted in the end, for the planned witches' sabbath — the scene which bears the title *Walpurgis Night's Dream*, or *The Golden Wedding of Oberon and Titania* — makes dramatically much less sense and constitutes a feeble and needlessly distracting episode in *Faust, Part One*. No one who has ever suffered

The play of desire

Patrick Lindsay Bowles

Jean D'Ormesson

Mon dernier rêve sera pour vous: Une biographie sentimentale de Chateaubriand 445pp. Paris: Lattès

Following his 1981 biography of God (*Dieu, sa vie, son œuvre*), Jean D'Ormesson has now written a biography of Chateaubriand. If his description of the latter at one point as "a cruel and dangerous Don Juan" might seem to suggest a relationship with his earlier subject, it is not with God but with himself that D'Ormesson wishes, on this point at least, to compare Chateaubriand. Or so one gathers from the unfortunate assertion which appears beneath a colour photograph of the author on the back of the book: "the portrait of a seducer by a writer, and perhaps vice versa."

As the sub-title indicates, the emphasis here is on the women by whom the Enchanter was himself most enchanted: his sisters; his long-suffering, generous and unpleasant wife Célestine; of whom Hugo has left perhaps the most memorable portrait in *Choses vues*; and above all his mistress, Juliette Récamier. It was her death which kindled Chateaubriand's famous conversion - "J'ai pleuré et pleuré", and it is to her that his career was devoted. With his *Génie du christianisme*, the thirty-four year old apologist more than fulfilled his earlier vow: "Je voudrais un grand bruit afin qu'il montât jusqu'au séjour de ma mère." And his dedication of the work, not to his mother, but to Napoleon and the Pope, is early evidence both of his disdain for half-measures and of a Faustian understanding of self-promotion.

But *Mon dernier rêve* is principally

about Chateaubriand's extra-familial loves, those creatures whom Célestine de Chateaubriand called "les Madames". The book's six chapters are devoted to those of Chateaubriand's mistresses or friends whose influence upon him was most decisive. The only one of his foreign conquests here documented is his early encounter with the timid Charlotte Ives in England. Chapter Two recounts his rather more fulfilling liaison with Pauline de Beaumont, as well as a simultaneous affair with Delphine de Custine, into whose famous bed at her Fervages estate Chateaubriand was flattered to have been preceded by, among others, Henri IV. (The latter, delighted, had the words "La dame de Fervages / Mérite de vives attaques" carved into one of the mantelpieces there.) Although Chateaubriand once claimed to prefer stupid women to intelligent ones, it is the most brilliant of his mistresses, Juliette Récamier (Chapter Four), that he spoke the words of D'Ormesson's title. Chapters Three and Five are devoted to Chateaubriand's involvement with Natalie de Noailles and Cordélia de Castellane, his two most passionate relationships and, significantly, the only two of his mistresses not mentioned in the *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*. The final chapter is on Hortense Allart, author of a scandalous account of her relationship with Chateaubriand, and with whom, in her own words, the poet that his career was devoted to "faisait ce qu'il voulait".

Without so much as a nod to psychoanalysis, D'Ormesson has written not only a popular romance but a profound study of the play of desire in history, showing how each stage of Chateaubriand's career was marked by a woman or women, from his hungry exile in London (where the natives called him "Mr Shatter-Brain") to his fame as ambassador and as minister: from *René* to *la Vie de Ranée*. There is,

of course, nothing new in claiming that great men are the results, willed or unwilled, of great women; the "Cleopatra's nose" school of historical theory is much older than Pascal. What is interesting here, however, is the specific context within which Chateaubriand's quest for love and fame unfolds. For his literary and political careers are perhaps most profitably viewed as an important chapter in what may be described as the erotic history of Christian apologetics.

"Christianity" was for Chateaubriand simply the high style that he gave to his literary, political and erotic pursuits. That his project for the "restoration of the Catholic religion" never evolved very far beyond an aesthetic programme is comically evident in the words he is made to speak by the wicked Marie-Joseph Chénier:

O sensible Atalaa tous deux avec ivresse
Courrons goûter encore les plaisirs de la messe!

Je prétends chaque jour relire auprès de toi
Trois modèles divins, la Bible, Homère et moi.

But the things that do not appear in this high style are almost as interesting as those that do. D'Ormesson suggests that a comic sequel to his own study could be written by consulting the writings of Chateaubriand's various servants. The juxtaposition of certain earnest literary passages in the *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem* with the parallel entries in the diary of his valet, Julien Potelin, for example, reveals two visions of the world as wildly unequal as those of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Here is Chateaubriand writing somewhere between Smyrna and Constantinople:

Je vois aujourd'hui, dans ma mémoire, la Grèce comme un de ces cercles éclatants qu'on aperçoit quelquefois en fermant les yeux. Sur

cette phosphorescence mystérieuse se dessinent des ruines d'une architecture fine et admirable, le tout rendu plus resplendissant encore par je ne sais quelle autre clarté des muses. Quand retrouverai-je le thym de l'Hymerie, les laurier-roses des bords de l'Eurotas?

Julien notes in his diary: "Monsieur, qui s'était endormi sur son cheval, est tombé sans se réveiller." On board ship between Constantinople and Jaffa, Chateaubriand writes: "On entendait de tous côtés le son des mandolins, des violons et des lyes. On chantait, on dansait, on riait, on priait. Tout le monde était dans la joie. On me disait: Jérusalem! en me montrant le midi; et je répondais: Jérusalem!" Julien's diary: "Pendant plusieurs jours de mauvais temps que nous avons eus, les

femmes et les enfants étaient malades et vomissaient partout."

One can perhaps fully grasp the unintended humour of Victor Hugo's encore par je ne sais quelle autre clarté des muses. Quand retrouverai-je le thym de l'Hymerie, les laurier-roses des bords de l'Eurotas? But D'Ormesson's account of Chateaubriand in love, wittily narrated, with precisely the right balance between irony and admiration, allows one to see in Hugo's grandiose ambition the simplest of all desires: to live life to the fullest. D'Ormesson points out in an appendix that his book is not a work of scholarship. But it brings Chateaubriand and his age to life more successfully than a whole library of works by specialists, and scholars would be wrong to overlook it.

Constant contradiction

Peter Jimack

JOHN HOPE MASON

The Irresistible Diderot 403pp. Quartet. £15. 0 7043 2277 3

For the general public, Diderot is surely still overshadowed by Rousseau and Voltaire, whose stock has in recent years risen steadily among eighteenth-century scholars, most of whom would probably put him on a par with his two great contemporaries. It is thus a great pleasure to welcome the book, which presents a wide range of judiciously selected extracts from Diderot's writings in English translation, together with descriptive and analytical commentaries which, even without the extracts, would have made a useful introduction to Diderot.

John Hope Mason's task was by no means easy. Diderot's interests were certainly extensive: in addition to his novels and plays and his major contributions to dramatic theory and art criticism, his writings ranged from the description of manufacturing techniques through ethics and aesthetics to what we would now call sociology and psychology. It is an impressive feat on Mr Mason's part both to have conveyed some impression of the nature and extent of Diderot's contributions in these diverse fields, and to appear equally at home in discussing all of them. He has managed to include substantial extracts from all the major works, and at least fragments of most of the more interesting minor ones. Most of the translations are Mason's own, and very sound they are: too one can hardly blame him for not capturing in English all the vigour and richness of the original; as for accuracy, I have noticed no errors, and only the occasional infelicity ("my dear" for "mon cher", for example).

As for the actual interpretation of Diderot's works, I find myself broadly in agreement with Mason. When we disagree, I readily accept that his position is a tenable one. For example, he sees Diderot's reluctance to become a complete atheist as due to "a religious streak in his character"; it may be so, though I am more inclined to believe that his hesitation stemmed mainly from a realization of the dangerous moral implications of atheism, which was apparent in all his early works. Mason is rather dismissive towards the episode of the *Promenade du Scapin* in which the Christian newly-converted to atheism becomes an anti-social criminal (indeed he is unfairly dismissive, towards the whole work; for me, this episode represents vividly Diderot's consciousness of the social problem posed by the existence of the *méchant*: his repeated assertions that happiness depended on virtue could not blind him to the fact that this was simply not true for all men. This is, I believe, unlike Mason, the main issue in *Le Neveu de Rameau*).

The critical sections of the work contain occasional slips, curiously mostly in names and book-titles: Maupertius for Maupertius throughout, Rousseau's *Réveries d'un solitaire* (instead of *du Promeneur solitaire*, Diderot's *Principes philosophiques* de (instead of *sur*) la matière et le mouvement and *Essai sur les Règles de Claude et Néron* (instead of *de Néron*). But these are minor blemishes which scarcely detract from the overall thoroughness of this book: Mason shows a wide range of cultural reference, a very sound grasp of the historical and philosophical backgrounds, and an impressive familiarity with recent Diderot scholarship (backed up by a good bibliography).

The main problem he has not solved satisfactorily is the arrangement of his anthology, though Diderot is, to be sure, peculiarly difficult to arrange. It is perfectly reasonable in a book on Rousseau simply to deal chronologically with each of his major works in turn; whereas with Voltaire, who wrote a vast amount, but very few (if any) major works, such an approach is obviously out of the question. Diderot is more akin to Rousseau: in this respect he also poses something of the problem we have with Voltaire. After the first few, there seems little

point in discussing his works chronologically, and there is anyway a vast amount of thematic overlap between them. It is impossible to deal adequately with any of his major themes without referring to a great many different works; and difficult to deal adequately with the works individually without being unacceptably repetitive. To some extent Mason falls between two stools: his chapter on the *Neveu de Rameau* and the *Rêve de d'Alembert*, for instance, deal very competently with these two works; but the later chapter on "Morality", a title adopted no doubt as a convenient way of grouping the *Leurre à Landais*, the *Réputation d'Helvétius*, and the *Commentaire sur Hénesterhuis*, seems nevertheless very incomplete without a discussion of the *Neveu* and the *Rêve*, as well as other texts similarly passed over here, such as *Jacques le fataliste*. And the chapter on "Sexuality" is devoted almost entirely to the *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, but gives a satisfactory account neither of the theme (it does not even refer to the ejaculation episode in the *Rêve*, mentioned in that chapter), nor of the work itself, which is more important as a discussion of sociological and political themes than merely of sexuality.

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RELIGION

ROBERT S. FOGARTY

The Righteous Remnant: The House of David 250pp. Kent State University Press. Distributed in the UK by Eurospan. £12.50. 0 87338 251 X

Religion is always ripe for scandal, whether it be nineteenth-century Mormon polygamy or the contemporary "flirty fishing" of female members of the Children of God, who by offering companionship, and if need be, to lonely men, seek to win them to their sect. The world expects religious virtuosity, whether they are sectarians or cardinals, to be holier than other men. Yet for the world's taste, holiness can also easily go too far, and excessive rigour, perhaps even celibacy itself, may arouse hostility almost as much as does laxness and licence. Sects generally proclaim a different ethic from that of the world, and unconventional practice is often in itself a banner for a religious movement, a symbol of its rejection of worldly values and arrangements. This is as true of the refusal, even at death's door, of blood transfusions by Jehovah's Witnesses as of the willingness of young Moonies to live a thoroughly chaste life until the Revd Mr Moon has chosen for them their marriage partners.

Such distinctive moral positions have their own rationale for believers, and what the outside world considers scandalous, the sect may have established as a regular and well-legitimized practice. Such departures from convention make easy targets for those who seek to attack religious minorities (not that sects alone suffer: many similar things to those today said against the Moonies, for example, were said, in not very different terms, and by people equally ignorant, against Roman Catholic convents and monasteries in late nineteenth-century Britain). Such critics rarely pay serious attention to a sect's own justifications for its modus vivendi, or to the theological, ecclesiastical or metaphysical premises on which its moral practice rests. Mormon polygamy, "flirty fishing" and no doubt the Vatican banking practice can all be provided with explanations that make departures from everyday moral

standards comprehensible to those willing to pursue matters beyond journalistic accounts.

Journalism can take its toll of truth even retrospectively, of course. Historians must often rely on contemporary journalistic accounts for their evidence, and when it comes to religious matters, journalists then were no doubt as ignorant as are journalists today, and perhaps even more prejudiced. Robert S. Fogarty, fortunately, has an eye for the unsupported story, and his reliance on journalistic sources is regularly underpinned by other evidence of the bizarre events that he has to record. If sects are often falsely maligned, there are cases, none the less, where the pathological does occur. The People's Temple at Jonestown was one such. And the House of David was another. Fogarty's extensive investigation of the sources does nothing to improve the image which the House of David and its leader, Benjamin Purnell, acquired, even though, as Fogarty makes clear, the truth of the allegations against Purnell was never accepted by many of his followers.

The House of David was the descendant of a congeries of sects that may be traced back through a string of sometimes rival prophets and prophetesses, conspicuously to Joanna Southcott (1750-1814) and, before her, to Richard Brothers (1757-1824) the founder of the British-Israelite tradition. Brothers' theory that the British were descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel exerted considerable influence in his day and since. It is a thesis that is still espoused by some respectable members of the Church of England (including clergy) and, at different times, it worked disruptively within such diverse movements as Christian Science and the Elim Pentecostal Church. It is from the distinctive sects of this Israelite tradition, with their strong millennial beliefs, that the House of David emerged.

Fogarty provides a brief account of these movements. The most important were the Christian Israelites led by John Wroe (1782-1863), a large part of whose following was at Ashton-under-Lyne (Wroe's unlikely candidate for the New Jerusalem), and its rival, the New House of Israel of James White Jezreel (1840-1885), whose unfinished great tower remained to be seen at

Chatham until only a dozen or so years ago. Both were active prophets, and Wroe spread his mission in both the United States and Australia, where, in Melbourne, one of his churches still exists. It was Wroe who obliged his followers to take up the biblical Nazirite practice of leaving their hair uncut, and who had himself publicly circumcised in testimony to his Israelite faith. James White and "Queen" Esther, sought to gather the Israelites to Chatham before the day of doom, but their sudden deaths, within a few years of each other, and the failure of prophecy exposed the sects of the Israelite tradition to a period of contention among rival successors to the prophetic mantle. From among those rivals emerged Benjamin Purnell (1861-1927), a leading member of the sect in Detroit, and an itinerant missionary. Purnell, who described himself as the seventh messenger (in the Southcottian line), succeeded in gathering many of the Michigan Israelites together into a colony at Ben Hur Harbor, where the 144,000 were to prepare for the new life. He persuaded a large contingent of his Australian Wroelites to emigrate to swell the Michigan colony, over which he proclaimed himself the Messiah.

Rumours of Purnell's amorous disposition and occasional accounts by disaffected young women of his sexual adventures soon attracted notice beyond the confines of the community, but the leader's foibles were not, as Fogarty makes clear, by any means the only aspect of the settlement's history worthy of note. Devoted labour from adoring followers enabled Purnell to develop a successful and apparently efficient communal enterprise. We do not learn much of the specifically religious life of the community, and the details of the economic organization are perhaps no longer recoverable, but the results were evident in the operation of farming, forestry, sawmills, a printing plant, machine shops and a cement works. Such manifest economic acumen has occasionally won respect for communarian sects - for the Rappites or the Amana Society, for instance. In this case, laced with the rumours of Purnell's sexual proclivities, it became another source of discredit for the House of David. Conscientious hard work and the

asceticism of sectarian life may easily be reinterpreted as economic exploitation; devotion is translated as evidence of mind control (or brainwashing); and the resultant prosperity becomes evidence of avarice.

Cynicism concerning the House of David was fortified by the ease with which the members catered to the tastes of the visiting public, who, in the colony's heyday, amounted to some 200,000 a year. The colony had two orchestras, an amusement park with a miniature railway, many souvenir stalls and even a successful (and of course long-bearded and long-haired) baseball team which attained a considerable reputation. Such activities are not easily accommodated in the public expectation of sectarian asceticism. Yet the programme also included religious meetings, and the inclusion may have been partly conceived as a way of attracting potential converts to the colony. After all, church tourism is not made more respectable merely because cathedrals are ancient, and the junk souvenirs there are probably no less meretricious than the goods sold on the stalls at the House of David, which had at least the merit of being handicraft items "made on the premises".

Commercialism and economic exploitation - particularly in the early twentieth-century American Midwest - were scarcely dispositions that could alone have led to the prophet's downfall. The real complaints were of his sexual adventurism. Fogarty shows that Purnell's whole career, from long before his Messianic period, had been punctuated by sexual escapades. Eventually, after abundant testimony laid against him over fifteen years, the Michigan authorities brought charges of rape. Convivance, collusion and conspiracy abounded in the community, and Purnell's (almost certainly bigamous) wife, Mary, who was suspected of conducting her own affair with the colony's secretary, appears to have at least tolerated the prophet's promiscuous sexuality. The official rule of the sect was celibacy, but as accusations against Purnell multiplied, so the leader ordered members to marry, and group weddings were arranged, perhaps, as Fogarty opines, to prevent evidence being obtained of Purnell's foraging among those supposed to be virgins.

Paradoxically, even after being forced into these marriages of convenience, couples were expected to maintain the rules of chastity, and even kissing between spouses was regarded as sinful. The colony's justification of these marital arrangements was that it eliminated misunderstandings when a couple of different sexes went on the road together to undertake itinerant evangelism.

Purnell, forced into four years' hiding, was eventually entrapped (by one of his disaffected young women victims) but he escaped the verdict of the protracted court proceedings by dying before they were concluded. For the faithful, Purnell's prosecution was merely persecution. The colony (divided by schism) survived, and even the baseball team continued its activities, and still today there are those who believe in Purnell's teachings. To the general public, the House of David was a fraud, a cover-up for a racketeer who managed to live a comfortable and dissolute life at the cost of his deluded followers. The Attorney General for Michigan, who eventually brought the proceedings, declared that the colony was "not and never had been a corporation for religious and ecclesiastical purposes". Yet, for many of his followers, Purnell was a Messiah. For the young women he was, literally, the bridegroom of the Scriptures. The young men, who, failing to obtain conscientious exemption, were drafted in the First World War, obeyed Purnell's demand that they do non-combatant service. They accepted army rules, but in accordance with their creed they maintained their long hair and vegetarian diet, and refused to handle dead bodies. Duffily, they sent back their pay cheques, supposedly to their "wives", but in fact to support the colony's general funds.

Professor Fogarty's study provides a vivid picture, in as much detail as can be reasonably expected for a movement of this kind, of the colony and of the background origins of the adherents, if not so fully of the texture of community life itself. He does not minimize the scandals to which some ex-members testified, and he is aware that only with a fuller account of the spiritual side of colony life might it be possible to understand the persistence of faith of these Israelites in their flagrantly wicked Messiah.

Canons of canonization

Gerard Irvine

JOHN J. DELANEY

Dictionary of Saints 647pp. Kaye and Ward. £12.50. 0 7182 2170 2

The number of men and women venerated as saints in the universal church is so vast that it would be impossible to make a comprehensive list of them. Quite apart from the thousands of saints peculiar to the churches of the East, and the predictably smaller number of those whose names are included in various Anglican provincial calendars, the Roman Martyrology alone has well over five thousand names; to this we must add the tens of thousands more whose *cultus* is purely local and of greater interest to the student of topography than of hagiology.

The most then that can be expected of any lexicographer of saints is a manageable selection of those about whom the general reader in any country might be expected to need information. In English there is Donald Attwater's *Penguin Dictionary of Saints* (lively but inevitably highly selective) and *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* by David Hugh Farmer (excellent but limited to saints of British provenance or veneration). More comprehensive was the *Legation Book of Saints* compiled by Abbot Thomas Bergh and his assistants at Ramsgate, first published in 1921 and now long out of print. John J. Delaney's work has taken

over the task of the Ramsgate Benedictines, bringing it up to date by the inclusion of all the recently canonized. Though his debt to the earlier book is everywhere clear, Fr Delaney's individual entries are longer; they are also fewer. Thus while the Ramsgate Fathers list 220 St Johns, Delaney only gives us 71; though it must be added that the recalcitrant martyrs (a surprising number of whom seem to have been called John) are listed by their surnames and in fairness should be added to this list.

The question for any compiler does not concern the great saints, but, at the lower levels of sanctity, is whom legitimately to exclude. Notions of saintly achievement have varied enormously. Many of those highly venerated in the Middle Ages - or even the Baroque epoch - for feats of thaumaturgy or corporal penitence would today speedily find themselves in a psychiatric clinic, even if the tales related of them are to be taken at their face value. The most popular saints of the Middle Ages, the so-called "Fourteen Auxiliaries" such as St Margaret, St Barbara, St Christopher, St Catherine and St George (till the most popular saint's names if you exclude Mary and a handful of the Apostles), are known for exploits based on what Delaney tactfully describes as "unreliable tradition".

Modern canonization procedure requires four miracles, but a healing is good enough - a far cry from the wonders attributed to the Auxiliaries. In fact the modern long (rarely less than fifty years) and expensive Roman procedure only dates back to Pope Gregory XIII's reforms in 1582. The names familiar to holidaymakers in the

Benedict XIV in the eighteenth century, and in its origins not further than the tenth century. The scrutiny required by these rules is sufficiently stringent to ensure that no unworthy candidate scrapes through. Before this, and still in other parts of the Church, the process was more haphazard: popular acclamation underwritten by provincial action, normally inclusion in a local calendar. No wonder that in the past (if not still today) strange fish have swum into the net. Nowhere is this more clear than in Celtic Christianity, where it is observable that most saints are of "royal blood". This would suggest that a claim of sanctity was as automatic an honour for clan chiefs and their families as a marble monument at a later age to the departed squire and his relations.

When it comes to Celtic saints, Delaney - as one might expect from his name - is pretty inclusive for the Irish ones. Less prudently he is generous in his inclusion of Anglo-Saxon candidates; though it is regrettable that of the three English saints whose relics survived the Reformation in their medieval shrines, St Bertalan at Ilam and St Cedd at Whitby, the Canonization got no mention. (The third, Edward the Confessor, is naturally included, but nothing is said of his much venerated shrine in Westminster Abbey, which he survived the dissolution of Cromwell's men.) While Delaney does fall short of his Benedictine predecessors in his treatment of Cornish saints, one looks in vain for St Brydgar, St Enebec, St Minver, St Beddellon or St Day, names familiar to holidaymakers in the

Duchy and to students of the work of the present Poet Laureate.

With this said, one must nevertheless commend the book as first-class: sensible, informed and informative. There are three useful appendices: of the symbols of the saints in art, of the patrons of trades, and of those of countries. The reader may be interested to discover that St Joseph of Cupertino (whose feats of

levitation are astounding but well attested) is the patron of air travellers; St Francis of coarctated St Gabriel of television workers and postmen; and St Adjutor of yachtmanship. Also that St Thérèse is, for some reason, one of the patrons of the USSR; St Maruthas of Persia; and the Sacred Heart (not a saint at all) of Ecuador; while the whole world was dedicated by Pius XII to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The Stature of Waiting

W. H. Vanstone

This fresh study of the passion of Jesus suggests a new attitude to those areas and phases of life in which people feel frustrated by their uselessness or loss of independence. Our "wishes" and our "dependences" are seen as signs and consequences of the love of God in us. In the end the "waiting" figure appears as a figure of extraordinary importance and remarkable dignity. The author's *Lovel's Endeavour, Love's Expense* won the 1979 Collins Biennial Religious Book Award.

The Ethos of the Bible

Birger Gerhardsson

The Old Testament provides the background for the author's detailed work on Matthew, Paul and John. The fundamental command of love for God is shown to be crucial in the ethical thinking of early Christianity.

Darton Longman & Todd

30 Mill Lane, London E9 6UD

John J. Delaney

Anglican Trojan Horse

Peter Hebblethwaite

BRIAN MARTIN

John Henry Newman: His Life and Work
160pp. Chatto and Windus. £8.95.
0 7011 2588 8

This is a very short book — none the worse for that — about a very long life. Its modest aim is to introduce Newman to those who know little about him. At the same time Brian Martin disposes of the myth, propagated by Lytton Strachey, that Newman was "a child of the Romantic Revival, a creature of emotion and memory, a dreamer whose spirit dwelt apart in delectable mountains". On the contrary, he writes, "Newman's emotions were subject to his intellect" and he worked out his religious positions by hard intellectual graft and scholarship. Far from being an ethereal figure, conversing apparently only with his Guardian Angel, he was a very practical leader of men. He introduced the Congregation of the Oratory into England and opened his first house in a former gin factory in Birmingham. He had to put up with endless trouble from Frederick Faber, Superior of the more socially acceptable London Oratory. Faber arguably wrote the worst hymns of any Victorian ("Oh happy pyx, oh happy pyx, where Jesus doth his dwelling fix") and insisted on calling Mary "Mamma" because he thought this was the Catholic thing. Newman did not share his view that becoming a Catholic meant giving up Italianate.

Newman also deserves credit for his organizing abilities in getting University College, Dublin off the ground. He felt torn in two, divided between Dublin and Birmingham. As a convert, he was mistrusted by most of the Irish bishops and had an *idea of a University* which, when they discovered it, was not exactly what they had in mind. He withdrew to the slums of Birmingham. Newman had businesslike qualities.

Nor should we picture him as a

withdrawn scholar, endlessly polishing what James Joyce called his "cloistral, silver-veined prose" in comfortable seclusion. Martin points out that nearly all his works were *pieces d'occasion*. He is asked to explain his move from the Anglican Church to the Church of Rome: he writes the *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. Charles Kingsley, a sanitation-obsessed Victorian worthy, accuses him of encouraging equivocation: he replies with his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*. Working lengthy hours on his reply to Kingsley, he falls ill, thinks he is going to die and composes his *Dream of Gerontius*. Bored by his Oratorian noviceship in Rome, he writes a novel, *Loss and Gain*, to while away the time. That was in 1848, but he did not admit authorship until 1874, and critics sententiously remarked that he had "sunk lower than Dickens". He never wrote in tranquillity. He was far more engaged than, say, Sartre.

The most tricky topic in any biography of Newman is his conversion to Rome in 1845. At the time it could not be expected to improve Anglican-Catholic relations. Gladstone described it as an event of calamitous importance. There was bitter talk of treachery and betrayal. Young men who followed Newman's example were cut out of will. Yet Martin, himself an Anglican, discreetly suggests that Newman's conversion was in the long term reconciling.

It is worth dwelling on this paradox. Martin is right, I believe, to suggest that Newman's conversion, so bitterly resented at the time, has a positive ecumenical meaning for today. He shows that Newman bore no ill will towards the Church which he had left.

He thought, for example, that the building of a new Catholic church in Oxford to commemorate the numerous conversions brought about by the Oxford Movement was unwise and unnecessarily provocative. Unlike Manning, whom he belatedly joined in the college of cardinals, he did not need to denigrate his past ministry in order to justify his present option. He laid, as it were, come definitively home from a valid, but somewhat leaky,

temporary shelter. Or, in his own phrase, not quoted by Martin, he exchanged a nurse for a mother.

But if Newman had no hostility towards the Church which he had so painfully and so painstakingly left, some of his new brethren regarded him as a crypto-Anglican, or Anglican Trojan Horse. Newman saw nothing to deplore in the loss of the Papal States and regarded the first Vatican Council as thoroughly regrettable (and not merely as inopportune, as legend has it). These were unorthodox opinions in the pontificate of Pío Nono. He had to wait for the next pontificate to get his cardinal's hat. Manning, the complete Ultramontane, said of Newman's version of Catholicism: "It is the old Anglican, patristic, literary Oxford tone transported into the [Roman Catholic] Church." The ironical truth is that Manning was absolutely right. He was deplored what we, today, can rejoice in: partly thanks to Newman, the Roman Catholic Church has learned something from the approach of the Anglicans; and in order to respond to the challenge of Newman, the Anglican Communion has drawn closer to Rome.

He was the invisible patron of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) which reported earlier this year. Though it never mentioned Newman, it borrowed from him a characteristic title for its response to objections, *Elucidationes*, and its eventual conclusion that the Church can do with a "universal primate" to make visible its unity echoes Newman's own personal pilgrimage.

Fifty-four illustrations greatly enhance the book. These earnest Victorians leap out of the pages and come alive. In particular three portraits of John Henry Newman make one reflect on life and mortality. A miniature by Sir William Ross in 1845 shows a nervous-looking, intense don. His hands are tightly clasped in front of him. He peers out through the round lenses of his spectacles, hardly larger than his eyes. He wears a white tie. His hair is not parted but falls in a forelock



Newman photographed in London in December 1861: reproduced from the book reviewed here.

toward the right. Sir John Millais's portrait of 1881 shows Newman in the splendid crimson robes of a cardinal of the Roman Church. The hair is now white, but the forelock still falls to the right. The tired eyes look out directly — with the look of a man who is at peace and in harbour. The feeling of serenity comes out even more in a photograph taken in 1885. Newman, with a remarkably unlined face for a man of 84, cups his hand behind his ear, as though straining to catch what is being said. He did not like the picture, believing that the shabby coat he happened to be wearing "advertised

his poverty". The white forelock still falls to the right.

Brian Martin has dusted down the portrait of Newman and shown without undue strain his relevance for today. There are two questions to which he cannot give an answer. Was Newman too good on the violin, or was his violin-playing merely therapy? And was he joyful, did he have that quality of *hilaritas* which is required for the process of beatification that is supposed to be progressing? Von Hügel held that Newman was too miserable to be beatified. I suspect that Newman himself might have agreed. "Saints", he wrote, "are not literary men."

Calculated beliefs

W. J. Hollenweger

DAVID B. BARRETT

World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000
1009pp. Oxford University Press.
£35.
0 19 572435 6

If we judge the significance of religion on the basis of its importance in our own social context, on the grounds of the available statistics in our own country (or worse within the scope of our personal relationships), we may be grossly misled. This is superbly

demonstrated by David B. Barrett's monumental *World Christian Encyclopedia* with over a thousand tightly printed pages in three columns.

Barrett's factual research, his statistics and tables show that Christianity has been in the twentieth century "the most extensive and universal religion in history". For the first time in history it has become "ecumenical in the literal meaning of the word: its boundaries are coextensive with the *oikoumene*, the whole inhabited world. In two-thirds of the world's 223 countries, Christians now form the majority (over 50%). Nine hundred and ninety million (22.6% of the world's population) are listening regularly to Christian radio and TV.

We have the paradoxical situation that, although the percentage of Christians in the world has fallen regularly since 1900, the outreach, impact and influence of Christianity have risen spectacularly by something like 140%. The dimensions of the unfinished task of world evangelization are in fact very much smaller than contemporary Protestant and Catholic missionary organizations realize.

But this Christianity is a highly complex religion. The forging of the statistical and phenomenological categories, the collection of the fifteen hundred highly informative and unexpected photographs, the minute recording of the history, size and activity of 20,800 denominations in all countries has taken a team of internationally known scholars (not all of them Christians) twelve years. The significance of this diversity will have to be discussed thoroughly in future by Western historians, sociologists and theologians who in general write about the doctrines of Christianity, the history of the Church, on the basis of their almost complete ignorance of what is going on in those parts of the

world where Christianity is not only growing by leaps and bounds but also where it asks other questions and gives different answers from those to which we are accustomed. Barrett describes this as the shifting of the centre of gravity from Europe/America to Africa, Latin America and certain specific countries in Asia. The majority of Christians are now non-white. It is no longer predominantly a white man's religion. The most widely used Christian language is no longer English but Spanish. What a challenge for our departments of theology and religious studies! How are we going to cope with the fact that we have to learn — and to learn fast — about the beliefs and theologies of these other Christians if we want to remain in contact with the centre of gravity?

It is precisely the diversity of Christianity which is mainly responsible for this phenomenal growth in the Third World. It allows for better adaptation to local circumstances. (A historical example of this development was, of course, the Church of England, once one of the most indigenous churches of the world.) It has made it far more difficult for hostile regimes to control or suppress Christianity. This is particularly the case for the unrecognized churches in the Soviet Union, but also for many indigenous churches in Africa, eg in Zaire and South Africa.

David Barrett confesses that one of the more startling findings documented in this survey is the existence of a whole new bloc of global Christianity unrelated to either Western or Eastern Christendom; this is termed here Non-White Indigenous Christianity. Parts of it have been known about for many decades; but no-one realized its formidable, collective size and its immense aggregate size — 82 million affiliated church members in 1980.

and still growing without any significant help from outside.

One of the reasons why they were not known was the fact that they could not be bothered to join any national or international ecumenical or denominational organization — a problem which will have to preoccupy all those ecumenical agencies which understand themselves as spokesmen for the Christians of the Third World. The majority of these Christians have no wish to be represented by anybody.

It would be tempting to discuss some of the countries in detail, eg Tonga, where the Methodist Church is the Established State Church, the Pitcairn Islands, where all inhabitants are Seventh Day Adventists, or even the UK, where one may be astonished to find that Italian is classed as one of its major languages, or the Soviet Union, where there are more Christians than members of the Communist party, or many of the Latin American countries, where indigenous Pentecostals form the second largest denomination, far outnumbering traditional Protestant and Anglican churches.

It would be equally tempting to discuss a number of questions which this statistical review raises. I single out two:

1. In the twentieth century Christianity is growing in absolute numbers but its proportion in the world population is declining (the same is true of all other major religions). What happens to those who turn their backs on their former religion? It seems to me that this question is not yet fully answered by the statistical survey. France has, for example, 80% Christians, 12% non-religious and only 3% atheists. The UK has 86% Christians, 8.8% non-religious and a meagre 0.7% atheists. There are more Jews in the UK than atheists. East Germany has 64% Christians, 25% non-religious, 11.4% atheists (but a

national income per capita which is higher than the UK). Even the Soviet Union has 36% Christians, 11% Muslim, 29% non-religious and 22% atheists. One of the few really secularized countries seems to be the Peoples' Republic of China, with 60% non-religious, 20% Chinese folk religionists, 12% atheists and only 0.2% Christians. The latter, however, are growing strongly, without missionary help from outside.

Barrett seems to suggest that those who leave their religion turn to what he calls "secularism in its religious form", for which China and the Soviet Union would be examples. To be used validly this expression would need to be expanded and plausibly explained. Barrett is, however, certainly right when he points to a number of newly emerging pseudo-religious beliefs, organizations and liturgies, based on a number of metaphysical systems. Indonesia, with 39% new religionists, would be a point in case.

2. The obvious question which has to be asked about such an encyclopedia is this: What is its definition of a Christian? Following the UN Declaration of Human Rights, Barrett discusses the question of definition in depth. He uses a number of definitions and therefore comes up with different types of statistics. One of them is to list as Christians those who declare themselves to be Christians (eg, in government censuses). But Barrett also takes into consideration other criteria, such as the statistics of churches, which are in most cases considerably lower than the statistics which are based on the "declared" faith of the population.

This encyclopedia represents a major event in the book market. For a relatively modest price one gets a whole library. In addition to maps, tables and religious statistics, the relevant secular data of each country are listed.

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A short life after death

A. E. Harvey

J. DUNCAN M. DERRETT

The Anastasis: The Resurrection of Jesus as an Historical Event

166pp. P. Drinkwater, Shipton on Stour, Warwickshire. £5. 0 9055731 4

The New Testament gospels continue to present a tantalizing challenge to the ingenuity of their readers. To the believer, the facts they record about Jesus appear substantially true; but the questions raised by the differences between the four narratives, the theological and apologetic interests of the writers, the influence on the narrative of scriptural precedents and prophecies and in general the complex relationship between matters of faith and matters of history are sufficient to occupy the entire working life of any scholar. To the unbeliever, there is the additional factor that in many respects it seems that the evidence of the gospels must be rejected. The claims made for Jesus are false; and many of the narratives, being either "miraculous" or for other reasons historically improbable, must be regarded as simply untrue. There then presents itself the absorbing task of reconstructing what really happened from the suspicious traces which still survive in the gospel accounts.

These problems are presented in an acute form by the Resurrection. That Jesus "rose from the dead" is a matter of faith. It is affirmed again and again by the New Testament writers, but the event itself is never described or explained; only certain historical consequences are recorded - that Jesus' tomb was found to be empty, that he was seen by some of his followers for a certain period after his death, that the sense of defeat and despair caused by the crucifixion was converted into a joyful conviction powerful enough to launch the

Protestant agenda

J. L. Houlden

C. K. BARRETT

Essays on Paul

172pp. SPCK. £10.50.

0 281 03833 3

Essays on John

168pp. SPCK. £10.50.

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M. D. HOOKER and S. G. WILSON

(Editors)

Paul and Paulinism: Essays in honour of C. K. Barrett

404pp. SPCK. £21.

0 281 03855 X

C. F. D. MOULE

Essays in New Testament Interpretation

327pp. Cambridge University Press.

£18. 0521 23783 1

If there is such a thing as an English school of New Testament studies, then surely it is recent years that C. K. Barrett and C. F. D. Moule, recently retired from their chairs in Durham and Cambridge respectively, their academic progeny hold a high proportion of the senior teaching posts in the subject. For a large number of clergy and teachers, their names are synonymous with soundness and dependability. Their books are among the few which students still afford to buy.

While much of Moule's work has concentrated on linguistic and grammatical points and Barrett's on a more discursive kind of exegesis, they share many features which, to a large extent as a result of their own prominence, seem to be special marks of English New Testament scholarship: an extreme judgment on pointing or

message was entrusted to a young man who, dressed in white for joy, met the women at the now empty tomb. Subsequently Jesus was also able to perform some sort of commissioning ceremony for his disciples, before his enfeebled condition brought on his inevitable death. But meanwhile his disciples had seen in Jesus' revival clear evidence of the power of God, and had interpreted it (perhaps taught by Jesus himself) as an earnest of the general resurrection of the dead.

In Derrett's expert hands, this hypothesis is arguably one that makes sense of the historical sediment still embedded in the gospel accounts, and explains the evolution of the faith-narratives which subsequently took the place of history. But it leaves, of course, a major question unanswered: what happened to Jesus' body? Derrett sees all too clearly the difficulties of virtually every possible answer. Jesus could not have been hidden or reburied without consequences which would certainly have left their traces in the tradition. By a process of elimination he arrives at the only remaining option: cremation. Totally alien to Jewish practice, and utterly scandalous to Jewish beliefs, a cremation nevertheless would have had some very slight biblical precedent. The disciples, believing their master to be truly "resurrected" already, might have overcome their natural scruples and disposed of the embarrassing, and now theologically insignificant, corpse in the only way practically open to them.

I must not seek to prejudice the reader's reaction to this extraordinary suggestion, which seems hardly, if ever, to have been seriously advanced before; nor to the difficulty of imagining that the lingering life for some thirty-six hours (Derrett's estimate) of a man who could barely speak or walk is the historical germ from which grew the narratives of Jesus' resurrection appearances. I make only a comment on the way the solution is reached. Derrett's whole reconstruction rests upon traces which

rushing to conclusions, no exorbitant claims where evidence is scanty, no attempt to be merely fashionable, and, on the positive side, careful attention to the detail of the text, and willingness to listen to the New Testament writer himself rather than the advocate of some sharp-edged modern school of interpretation. In general, more solidity than imagination, and a tendency to arrive at well-tryed decisions on disputed issues.

This style of work does, nevertheless, manifest a distinct point of view, even if it is concealed in an ethos of almost anti-ideological common sense. It is, for example, Protestant rather than either Catholic or detached. That is, the New Testament usually turns out, with whatever refinements and allowances, to work to a Protestant agenda; as indeed, perhaps it often does, though others now would be more conscious of the New Testament world - including the New Testament Christians - in their alienness and particularity, and resist the impulse to move, even ever so covertly, from New Testament issues and situations to those of today.

Neither Barrett nor Moule reads the New Testament with a crude determination to apply it, but both believe it to contain the necessary and abiding foundations of Christian theology, and indeed Barrett reads those foundations in Paul above all. Devoted as both are to historical method (thousands have learnt to understand it at their hands), both are also committed men with a theological task to perform. Any Christian theologian, whether his point of departure is the New Testament or elsewhere, is bound to work in relation to Christian origins on the one hand and on the other to his own place in the tradition which has flowed from it. Yet, at the same time, historical method forbids him to see the past, however significant it turned out to be, as having occurred in order to foreshadow succeeding stages of development, as somehow having been in mind, in this sense, the methods of the historians and the

theologian strive with each other inside the New Testament scholar. Not that you would think so in most of the sixty-nine essays which occupy the four volumes under review (that by M. E. Glasswell in the Barrett Festschrift is an exception). There are, after all, a number of escape routes, each blocking off certain possibilities, each ensuring that the threatened assault on integrity will either never be fought or be reduced to diplomatic encounter. The commonest is pure linguistic study of the text and the discussion of exegetical minutiae. As is the way with the genre, the essays for Barrett contain a number of examples. Such contributions leave the theologian speechless: strictly, he can have nothing to say; less strictly, he may be scandalized, that in relation to these texts of all texts history has wholly taken over. Elsewhere, there is the retreat into instant homiletic application, the determination to find a lofty use for the sacred text. And the price is to deprive the text of its independence and its difficulty. There is a constant uncertainty in much New Testament scholarship: is it undertaken because it is worth while to understand a text in its own right? Or is there the further motive that understanding this text is somehow important for faith and theology now? One cannot complain that these essays do not formally discuss these questions. One can complain that they do not seem to have them much in mind: it is as if they do not arise. But the usefulness of New Testament studies to theology depends on their being never far from the surface.

Yet certainly both Barrett and Moule have striven to "go soft" on neither theology nor history. They do not always succeed (there is the element of subjectivism and anachronism in the Protestant tendency), and they do not always convey the sense that the New Testament writers were not simply our ancestors in faith but people of their own time and place. As so often in biblical scholarship, there is an

impression of an enclosed biblical world. Yet in a sermon which Barrett includes at the end of his *Essays on John*, there is both an illustration of the interpretative task, with its ambiguity and complexity, and a measure of the success which may be achieved in facing it. To turn to the contents of the volumes themselves. Two represent collections of essays (mostly already published) in the areas to which Barrett has given most of his life. Pauline and Johannine studies. The former concentrates on two aspects of Paul's work, his relations with the church in Corinth (six papers out of eight), and, more widely, the question of Judaism and the early Church, in effect the question of Christian self-definition. The Johannine essays include a set of four on doctrinal themes (symbolism, sacraments, paradox and dualism, and history), which show the author at work in a broader theological manner than most of his best-known writings. In *Paul and Paulinism*, with no less than twenty-nine contributions by friends, colleagues and pupils, some essays are on major Pauline themes like Law, others on familiar critical questions or problematic passages. Most of the collected essays, which go back as far as the early 1950s, cover the wide range of his interests, including questions about Jesus and the Gospels, and the major themes in New Testament theology. Some are rather dated (though in his foreword the author valiantly stands by them); some have become standard treatments of their subject, so that their more durable presentation is welcome. The anonymous friend who chose them out of so many more is to be congratulated.

can allegedly still be found in St Mark's gospel, despite the subsequent working-over which the story received at the evangelist's hand. St Mark's gospel, in its original form, stopped short of the events subsequent to the young man's announcement to the women. But the story was taken up by the other gospels. The crucial event, and one which must have been nothing less than traumatic for those of the disciples who were involved (and indeed for the rest when they heard about it) was the cremation of Jesus' body; but this (Derrett admits) has left no trace whatever in the sources. The brilliant detective, when surveying all the available clues, may sometimes achieve results by entertaining what seems initially a highly improbable solution; but the solution will begin to gain acceptance as soon as it is seen that it makes sense of hints that had been ignored or misunderstood before. But here there is no hint whatever. Even the detective's greatest admirers may remain unconvinced.

But, as in the best detective stories, the quality of the book does not stand or fall by the plausibility of the solution. Professor Derrett's mastery of his material is unquestionable; it is only sad that he sometimes feels it necessary to refer dispiritingly to what many scholars who combine faith with technical knowledge, even though he accepts uncritically the work of some of them (as, for instance, when he takes as established a recent suggestion, by no means universally accepted by scholars, that the account of the Empty Tomb in Mark owes its form to supposed ceremonies at an early pilgrimage to Jesus' assumed burial-place). There is much here that will intrigue and stimulate the general reader, as well as much which should be carefully pondered by the professional scholar; the book is unusual not only in the carefully reasoned ingenuity of its argument, but in the attractive format which its publisher has designed for it, and indeed in its very modest price.

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The price of benevolence

David Crane

PETER JENNINGS and EAMONN MCCABE

The Pope in Britain

128pp, with colour illustrations. Bod

From militancy to mildness

J. J. Scarisbrick

PETER HOLMES

Resistance and Compromise: The Political Thought of the Elizabethan Catholics
279pp. Cambridge University Press.
£22.50.
0 521 24343 2

What, another book on Elizabethan Catholicism? Yes, and a good one. Readers who doubted, as I did, whether there was much more to be said on the subject, particularly this aspect of it, will be quickly reassured. Peter Holmes opens up new territory, re-charts the old, challenges and corrects several previous maps.

The point of the book is to show how complex and inconsistent were the political attitudes of Elizabethan Catholics. Like German Lutherans in the first half of the sixteenth century and French Huguenots in the second, they zigzagged continually between loyalty and resistance.

Briefly, the story is this. For the first ten years after the new, Protestant regime was set up, English Catholics,

ie, a group of vociferous exiles in Louvain, while denouncing the religious settlement in their homeland, none the less preached secular loyalty and non-resistance. In temporal matters, they claimed, the Queen would find that Catholics made model subjects and citizens. It was Protestantism which was the mother of mischief – overturning the old order and old decencies, and above all, preaching sedition. Look at France (and soon the Netherlands). Read Knox. Read Goodman and Ponet – English Protestants who had blazed away against Mary Tudor and taught rebellion. And so on.

Then, in 1569, came a sudden change. With the Northern Rising, followed by Elizabeth's excommunication, loyaltyism gave way to theory of resistance, a turnabout epitomized by *De visibili monarchia*, 1571, of Nicholas Sander, a leading Louvainist. For five years, religious disobedience cohabited with secular disobedience. By 1574, however, the two were drifting apart. The failure of political action and William Allen's decision to send his seminary priests to England acquired that recusancy return to its former partner, loyaltyism. Sander and his like were silenced. A famous book

nicknamed "Bristow's Motives" preached obedience despite Elizabeth's excommunication; and for the next ten years Catholics kept to strictly non-political writings, such as catechisms, prayer manuals and similar works.

Loyaltyism in temporals came to a climax with the arrival of the Jesuits in 1580. Campion and Persons insisted that their purpose was purely spiritual, continually stressed their devotion to Elizabeth, they flattered her. Allen and the seminaryists followed suit. Given the circumstances – plots, Philip II and all the rest of it – Campion and the others were naive to think that the government would believe them and accept the advanced idea that religious recusancy could go hand in hand with secular obedience. But, as P. McGrath justly remarked several years ago, it was no less unfair of Cecil and Co to try to label all Catholics as traitors – to which, predictably and skilfully, they did. William Allen was surely right when he said that, since no one would or could argue that the ancient religion was heresy, the charge of treason was the only way of discrediting Catholicism; and it also had the advantage of allowing Protestants to say that no one was being persecuted for his religious beliefs.

Obedience of Elizabethan Catholics broke under the strain of persecution, as it did so often elsewhere. The desire for revenge could not be contained. Force would be met by force. Allen's *A true, sincere and modest defence of English Catholics* and Persons's *Private Eye-type Leicester's Commonwealth* signalled the new mood.

The "bloody questions", it may be observed, drove Catholics into active disobedience as surely as Elizabeth's treatment of the more zealous Protestants engendered increasingly militant Puritanism. Dr Holmes argues that events in France were no less important. The death of the last Valois heir in 1584 left Catholics facing the prospect of a heretic ascending the throne and in turn recreated the Catholic League, which promptly took up the doctrines of resistance and tyrannicide that Huguenots had until recently espoused (but now discreetly buried).

English Catholicism followed French into populist theories of "ascending" political power, contractual kingship (exemplified by the coronation oath), the right of resistance and so on. Sander and other Louvainists returned to the attack. Persons gave Catholics their most radical view of things in his *Conference concerning the next succession* of 1596, which attributed to the community the right to elect and depose the ruler.

F. R. H. Du Boulay's phrase about fifteenth-century England, "An Age of Ambition", can be to some extent applied to contemporary Scotland. The century sees the first "royal burghs" officially so styled, the first archbishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, the first dukedom for a private subject, the first "peerage" in the modern sense, when "lords of parliament" gained social equality with the old earls and provincial lords. The Stewart kings too were affected by ambition. It can hardly be said that James III was any worse in this respect than his grandfather, father or son, but at certain crucial moments in his reign his judgment was faulty. Yet he survived the overwhelmingly ambitious 1482-83, and the very dangerous crisis of 1488-89, and finally he is said to have been unlucky in the rebellion of 1488 which carried him off, just as parliament said laconically that he "happit to be slain" on the field of Stirling (Sauchieburn), so it may be argued that James chanced to alienate an ill-assorted but temporarily strong minority of the burghs lucky in possession of the youthful heir to the throne. If this scholarly study proves anything, it proves that throughout the lengthy minorities of James II and from James II's return for almost a century the battle of Stirling, the mobility of the Stewart monarchy was subject to astonishingly little change.

Caroline Bingham
PLANTAGENET AND FIONA SOMERSET FRY
The History of Scotland
246pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£8.95.
0 7100 9001 3

The authors have addressed their concise *History of Scotland* to readers thus previously acquainted with the subject, and their narrative is suitably clear, straightforward and unpretentious.

"A nation's history is shaped by its geography", they remark in their first chapter; a nation's historiography is constantly reshaped by research and reinterpretation. An important purpose of a new *History of Scotland* is to present the results of these processes, and not merely to re-challenge established facts. The Somerset Fry's narrative, however, is unusually balanced between traditionalist and revisionist views of Scottish history.

The preliminary chapter on the prehistory of Scotland contains information which will surprise readers familiar with the long-accepted view of the civilization spread outwards from the New Stone Age.

So Catholic resistance theories were tough and hard-line all right. But there was one most interesting fact about them. Though they asserted the right of pope and king of Spain to crusade against England, they never took the ultimate step of calling upon the English to rebel; and they also stopped short of proclaiming the papal deposing power. Hence the paradox (noted by Holmes): it was not during the reign of excommunicated Elizabeth but under James I, whom no pope had directly threatened, that the deposing power became a burning issue.

Persons's *Conference* was the last blast of defiance. Events in France, growing anti-Spanish and anti-Jesuit sentiments, especially of the Appellants (looked in acrid squabbles with Persons and his supporters over the appointment of an archpriest to oversee the English mission), brought non-resistance theory to the fore again. Elizabeth became gracious queen once more, her persecution mild. Her patriotic Catholic subjects sought toleration – some being prepared to get Rome to remove Jesuits from England as part of the bargain. And even Persons turned over a new leaf, replacing militancy with mildness.

After two periods of loyaltyism interrupted by two periods of resistance, therefore, loyaltyism had finally come out on top, a fact which Robert Cecil and James I were quick to exploit and which helps us to put that last example of desperado violence, the Gunpowder Plot, into final perspective.

Such is the main drift of this exceedingly interesting, taut, lucid book. There are several minor themes. For example, there are intriguing accounts of maverick Catholics who defied the official line and argued that it was permissible to attend Protestant services and outwardly conform, and of others who were out of phase with the majority and preached obedience where the latter were on the resistance run – and vice versa. Holmes also summarizes the contents of his excellent edition for the Catholic Record Society of casuistical writings which show how, even at their most defiant, Allen and Persons allowed concessions to Catholic layfolk, including occasional conformity, to avoid detection and ruin, as well as permitting priests to disguise, equivocate and bend bits of canon law here and there.

A few comments suggest themselves. First, "resistance" is a sometimes rather elusive word. Apparently it can be as little as not singing Elizabeth's praises or being rude about her favourite – and as much

as calling upon foreign powers to invade her land. Perhaps there should be some distinctions, some gradations. Secondly, since resistance theories were so muted and cautious (Persons and Allen never thundered as Protestant Beza or Hotman thundered, and, as noted already, they never called up the Excoets), the pendulum swings between obedience and resistance were not as wide as a quick reading of this book might suggest. Holmes carefully shows how non-extreme most Catholics usually were. He insists that loyaltyism was the norm. He points out that the Counter-Reformation as a whole was increasingly monarchical and conservative in mood. Yes, as a matter of fact. But is it right to say that its ideology was? Victoria, Suarez, Bellarmine *et al* cannot be set aside thus (even though Bellarmine got into trouble for conceding too much to the state). Holmes has important points to make about the dangers of a crude division between clerical and "seigneurial" Catholicism. But I wonder if he would accept that not all who sought toleration were, so to speak, implicitly admitting defeat thereby. Some Catholics always believed that if the old faith was allowed its head (and allowed to be heard) it would beat the heretics hands down. For them toleration was the high road to victory. Loyaltyism thus becomes the highest form of resistance.

One can, of course, speculate endlessly about what exactly occasioned the oscillations between obedience and resistance which Holmes has so deftly analysed – as about the extent to which they were merely opportunistic. As against Holmes's theory, for instance, I like the recent suggestion that it was the apparent failure of the Campion approach which convinced Persons that sweetness and light would not work – rather than, say, events in France. I wonder, indeed, whether Persons had ever been an enthusiast for loyaltyism. And while I am on Persons, may I comment that I do not quite see why his "Memorial of the Reformation of England" of 1596 represents a retreat from former belligerence by a new-look Person? This truly remarkable sketch of the national regeneration which would follow England's return to the fold did not, I agree, "set out resistance theory or discuss the conquest of England". But should we expect it to have done? And the fact that it was never published proves what? Only, I think, that Persons did not want to give hostages to fortune or new sticks for his many opponents to use on him and the Society. But I have learnt so much from Dr Holmes that I would probably do well to pipe down.

The Sutton Hoo helmet, which confronts the reader on the dust-jacket of this book, is a fitting symbol of our knowledge of Anglo-Saxon England: a few corroded fragments pieced together with a mixture of expertise and ingenuity, given shape by large expanses of modern plaster, covering a human face which cannot be seen. The symbolism applies equally to modern studies of Anglo-Saxon history. In *The Anglo-Saxons*, the fragments of evidence are handled with due care and attention, and many choice examples are illustrated; moreover, each of the three authors is a dab hand with the plaster, and the shape that emerges is original, and in the best of good taste.

James Campbell, Patrick Wormald and Eric John have written what they describe at the outset as a "brief interpretative account of Anglo-Saxon history". This means, in effect, that they need not burden the text with too much narrative, and are enabled instead to discuss the issues that interest them most, leaving the reader with little opportunity to relax in the recitation of familiar events but ensuring at the same time that his concentration will be well rewarded. They assume responsibility for successive sections of the period, and while each inevitably adopts a different approach (determined in part by the respective concerns of the authors, but also by the changing possibilities of the subject), it must be said that their book is the more enjoyable as a result.

James Campbell covers the dark period of 1770-1980, is thematically arranged, and gives a prompt presentation of the trends and events leading up to the present, without attempting a coherent narrative, and an intelligent method of dealing with the complex period in a short volume.

This attractively written book stimulates the interest of many readers new to the subject, as it is intended to do. It is unfortunate, therefore, that there is no bibliography to guide them with a guide to further reading.

There seems little point in their returning to the old historical gossip about Mary, Queen of Scots, who was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle in 1567 "she either miscarried or gave birth to a premature baby. . . . According to one rumour, Mary had a daughter who became a nun in France." The tragic reality was that Mary miscarried of "deux enfants" which were stillborn.

Image and likeness

Brian Stock

KARL MORRISON

The Mimetic Tradition of Reform in the West
440pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
0 691 05350 2

Medievalists in our time, with rare exceptions, have shown little enthusiasm for crossing the boundaries of their discipline's specialities. They have thereby helped to perpetuate the outdated but still prevalent idea that the Middle Ages contributed little to the development of broader intellectual problems in the West.

Karl Morrison's study of the concepts of mimesis and reform between the Greeks and the later nineteenth century provides a refreshing contrast to this general trend. On the whole, his is a reflective study, more concerned with linking a group of authors in a consistent chain of reasoning than with re-creating a few decisive transformations in philosophical taste. The book is not a comprehensive survey but a set of variations around a theme. Rather than merely accumulating detail, each chapter asks the volume's central question anew.

Morrison's argument, *in nuce*, is that the principle which Erich Auerbach defined as the aesthetics of mimesis not only furnished a renewable stylistic strategy for Western literature and art, but from a historical point of view, also underlay entire systems of thought, including cosmology, epistemology and ethics. Morrison proposes that the notion of mimesis, despite a long, complex and often contradictory career, united within a single, expanding corpus of literary

possibilities the thought of such diverse figures as Philo and Paul, Augustine and Gregory the Great, Hume and Herder, and Pius IX and Dilthey.

The book is organized chronologically, and proceeds in three major sections devoted respectively to the Ancient World, the Middle Ages and the period between 1500 and 1900. However, Morrison's intention is not to reduce his theme to a series of formulae originating in ancient philosophy and subsequently reapplied in a linear fashion, but rather to illustrate, as he puts it, the "interweaving and ramifications of options, some apparent from an early time, others introduced along the way". His is therefore a "history of versions", a phrase which recalls Auerbach, and beyond him, Vico, as well as the rhetorical analyses of Hayden White. In an appendix Morrison also acknowledges a debt to two influential earlier studies of the theme, Charles Trinkaus's *In Our Image and Likeness* and Gerhard Lader's magisterial *The Idea of Reform*.

The result is a portrait of the mimetic tradition that is philosophically accurate, but, perhaps owing to the breadth of Morrison's interests, occasionally historically distorted. Cesser thinkers, like Ratramnus of Corbie, even where their influence is well attested, are omitted, as are the internal, often conflicting traditions arising out of major figures themselves. We have a lengthy treatment of Augustine's thoughts on mimesis, and to Morrison's credit, as the medieval rather than the ancient would have understood them; but there is no discussion of the liberal versus conservative Augustinianism of the Carolingian age, which, as much as doctrinal views, is what separates two of Morrison's representative authors from that period, Radbert and

Eriugena. We therefore have no satisfactory explanation of why Eriugena crops up so persistently, and often in an Augustinian context, at later moments in the history of mimesis, such as Eckhart, Nicolas of Cusa, Jacob Boehme and Hegel. On other occasions avenues of discussion are opened but not followed up. In place of a full exposition of Augustine's ideas on language – prolegomena, in my view, to an appreciation of such topics as "thinking about thinking" and "analogy and allegory" – we find only a lengthy note, recalling secondary literature, on the theory of signs. Hence, a consideration of St Anselm, whose linguistic approach to the problem of man's image and likeness is his maker brought about a revolution in early scholastic thought, is effectively prevented. Again, despite a fair outline of St Thomas's thoughts, no awareness is demonstrated of the actual uses (or non-uses) put to Aquinas's ideas in fifteenth and sixteenth-century schools of theology, on which P. O. Kristeller has written so eloquently.

A central strength of Morrison's book arises from the fact that, although it is in large part a study of medieval cultural survival it does not base itself on over-generalizations about "the medieval mind" or other assumptions about the presumed consistency of medieval thought. As a consequence, the analyses reach out to several branches of modern thought at once. Among such relationships, for example, Morrison points out that the concept of mimesis, as mystically interpreted by Eckhart and others, paved the way for many controversial politico-theological ideas in the nineteenth century, such as "the divination of change through the 'spirit of the age' or the 'spirit of the people'": the extinction of the individual moral personality, [and] the concept of the

historical process as something made by man".

But a central weakness arises from the treatment of the Middle Ages itself. Morrison virtually leaps from the Carolingian age to St Thomas, leaving only "strategic reorientations" for the three centuries which, in the eyes of many, saw the West's major fusion of ideas about mimesis and pragmatic approaches to reform, a point of view developed along different lines by R. Javelot, M.-D. Chenu and Sir Richard Southern. The problem is not only the omission of major figures at a theoretical level, such as Hugh of St Victor or Alan of Lille, but of failing to realize that, in later medieval society, in which many types of change were going on all at once, pure ideas were only one means of expression among others. This was, in fact, Europe's first large-scale laboratory for testing out the practicality of imitative and reformist notions. The Gregorian and anti-Gregorian publicists fought over what reform really meant, while, at a

more pragmatic level, orthodox and heretical religious movements implemented a wide variety of institutional changes designed to bring about a closer approximation to the apostolic life. The period's most dynamic movements – the Cistercians, the Carthusians, the Augustinian canons and the numerous sects for women – all felt some sort of imbalance between nature and art, which, Morrison correctly observes, lay at the heart of the Christian mimetic tradition, and which an ameliorative reformist strategy was to correct.

The question which this fascinating book will leave in many readers' minds is whether, in the Middle Ages at least, ideas and movements can ever really be completely divorced, and whether, if we are to give an adequate historical context to modern ideological controversies, we must not look beyond the elegant syntheses of great thinkers and at the ideas, rituals and symbols motivating the behaviour of ordinary men and women.

Monastic model

Jeremy Catto

L. C. HECTOR and BARBARA HARVEY (Editors)

The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394
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Richard II's reign was the Indian summer of the English monastic chronicle. Born of the Benedictine marriage to property and secular power, its thousand years of development were the witness of monks' involvement with "the world": the fortunes of royal and noble patrons, the demands of popes and hierarchies, laws and privileges, land, even the weather, the stuff of monastic history as of monastic life. There was of course development, from bare chronological summary to the literary creativity of William of Malmesbury and the inspired gossip of Orderic Vitalis, until, about 1300, the genre seemed to have run its course, winding down in a series of dull and impersonal annals. Monks were by then no longer the vanguard of learning, and their place at the elbow of kings and ministers had been usurped by the friars.

The best fourteenth-century historians were professional men like the author of the *Life of Edward II*, or poets like Froissart. Then at the end of the century, without much warning, monks resumed control of the historical record. This time their chronicles were anything but impersonal: lively, opinionated, sometimes libellous narratives from Thomas Walsingham at St Albans, Henry Knighton at Leicester Abbey, and from the monk (or monks) of Westminster whose *Chronicle*, first printed by Lumby in the Rolls Series in 1886, is now excellently re-edited and for the first time translated by the late L. C. Hector and Barbara Harvey. Most of the human drama of Richard II's turbulent reign – the affecting scene of the adolescent Richard taking control of the mob during the Peasants' Revolt, his attempt to impale the Archbishop of Canterbury on his sword as their barges passed on the Thames, his humiliation by the Appellant lords – in 1388 is derived from their often lurid pens.

This curious phase of monastic and literary history has never been fully explained. Now we have some new light on it, for the problem of authorship of the *Westminster Chronicle* has been brought as close as it will ever be to a solution: the candidates are Richard of Gloucester for 1381-83; and ex-prior Richard Exeter for 1383-94. Gloucester is known as a florid stylist, and a compiler of an history of England; Exeter, a worldly scholar, wrote nothing else but left a significant legal and historical library. If these identifications are correct, as

Westminster Chronicle was the work of a new monastic type. The new model had been to a university: both authors were Oxford graduates. Like his secular contemporaries, he was trained to be businesslike. The monks of the late fourteenth century had remarkable success in the king's service, and an Abbot of Westminster had even been Treasurer of England. The chroniclers, as their work shows, had a wide network of friends outside the cloister, strategically placed in Chancery or the royal household. They were perfectly at home with the details of parliamentary statutes, diplomatic manoeuvres and the complicated affairs of the City of London. If the new monk was not forgetful of religious duty, his devotions were quiet and discreet, avoiding pious exhibitionism. Above all, he had a broad acquaintance with the humanities. If Richard Exeter had read the books in his library he would have known the story of the Trojan war as well as Chaucer, and would have seen some idea, through Marco Polo, of the East. Here then on the surface is a discreetly anonymous chronicle, a naive amateur continuation of Higden's *Polychronicon*; in reality, a work of literature, or at least of the higher journalism, but unvarnished. If Higden was a fading influence, Commynes was just around the corner.

In fact the *Chronicle's* unvarnished form is an advantage. Thanks to careful editorial work the mechanics of the making of a chronicle can now be examined. The only manuscript is neither a first draft nor a final copy, and is in the hand of its second author, presumably Richard Exeter. He presumes to correct the work of his predecessor, the additional few personal touches, and then an earlier draft of his own: stop-press items, afterthoughts and observations found a place in the margin. The centre-piece of his work is the history of the savage judicial murders of 1388, the best account we have of the Appellants' crisis. It can now be seen in the making. Among the materials the chronicler used were correspondence, including: newsletters, party propaganda "schedules" and a "Process", or a list of official part of the medieval Parliament of 1388, like a Tudor state paper, altogether more revealing than the tidied-up version in the Rolls of Parliament. Another gripping tale of treachery, the story of the friar who after accusing John of Gaunt of plotting against the King's life, was silenced by the knights of the King's Chamber (1384), surprisingly turns out to be taken in all probability from an official deposition: its author, an unexpected early John de Carra, was evidently the keeper of the Peasants' Revolt. Chaucer was not the only civil servant who could weave a story.

This is a literary as well as historical goldmine. A distilling process by the Clarendon Press in an invaluable series. It is regrettable that the publisher has determined to issue it in a few copies as possible, but priced it at £48.00. It is a pity that the book is not more widely available.

John de Carra

